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ABSTRACT

This report describes a program for increasing levels of leisure time reading and heightened awareness of age and ability appropriate literature with an effort to encourage targeted students in grades 2, 3, and 6 to become lifelong readers. The targeted population lives in a growing rural, low to upper middle class community located in north central Illinois. Students had low levels of independent reading habits, documented through data from surveys and teacher observations. Analysis of probable cause data and professional literature revealed several possible causes for the lack of time students spend in leisure time reading. Children are being attracted regularly by electronic media entertainment and by extracurricular activities in an environment that does not promote leisure reading. In addition, children's unique differences have not been recognized in terms of their need for choice of reading material. Solution strategies consisted of providing sustained silent reading and emphasizing student choice--a vital feature of this intervention in terms of student selection of reading materials, response activities that recognize multiple intelligence and learning style theory, and decision making opportunities regarding participation in extrinsic reward programs. Motivational activities providing adult modeling in school and in the home were emphasized. Post intervention data indicated an increase in students' positive attitude and engagement in sustained silent reading, improved knowledge of a variety of genre and authors, and the development of multiple intelligences in sharing book responses with peers. Appended are: (1) Surveys (elementary reading attitude, 2nd/3rd grade literature awareness, 6th grade literature awareness, and parent pre-intervention); (2) bibliography; (3) chart of response choices using multiple intelligences; (4) parent permission form; (5) parent letter of introduction to project; (6) post-intervention parent letter; (7) parent post survey; (8) samples of post survey parent narrative responses--2nd/3rd grade; and (9) sample of 2nd grade quiet time reading log. (Contains 16 figures and 38 references.) (CR)

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ED 422 559

MOTIVATING INDEPENDENT READING: THE ROUTE TO A LIFETIME OF EDUCATION

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An Action Research Project Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the School of Education in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Teaching and Leadership

Saint Xavier University & Skylight
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ABSTRACT

This report describes a program for increasing levels of leisure time reading and heightened awareness of age and ability appropriate literature with an effort to encourage targeted 2nd, 3rd, and 6th grade students to become lifelong readers. The targeted population lives in a growing rural, Midwestern, low to upper middle class community located in north central Illinois. The problem was noted by the authors who found that students had low levels of independent reading habits. The problem was documented further through data from surveys and teacher observations.

Analysis of the probable cause data, as well as the professional literature, revealed that several possible causes exist for the lack of time students spend in leisure time reading. Children are being attracted regularly by electronic media entertainment and by extra curricular activities in an environment, both at home and in school, that does not promote leisure reading. In addition, children's unique differences have not been recognized in terms of their need for choice of reading material.

The solution strategies consisted of providing sustained silent reading, emphasizing student choice. Choice was a vital feature of this intervention in terms of student selection of reading materials, response activities that recognize multiple intelligence and learning style theory, and decision making opportunities regarding participation in extrinsic reward programs. Motivational activities providing adult modeling in school and in the home were emphasized.

Post intervention data indicated an increase in students' positive attitude and engagement in sustained silent reading, improved knowledge of a variety of genre and authors, and the development of multiple intelligences in sharing book responses with peers.

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CHAPTER I

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND CONTEXT

General Statement of the Problem

The students of the targeted elementary (K-8) classes exhibit inadequate levels of independent reading motivation. Evidence of this includes teacher observation of students' disinterest in reading while in the classroom, the lack of participation in incentive programs for independent readers both inside and outside the classroom, and the limited knowledge of age appropriate literature displayed by students.

Immediate Problem Context

Site A

Site A is a pre-kindergarten through fourth grade attendance center housing 171 students. The 40-year-old, one-story structure includes one class each of kindergarten through fourth grade, two instructional special education classes serving the entire district, and four half-day classes for three to five year olds which are operated through "At-Risk" grant funding.

According to the School Report Card for 1996, the student enrollment is comprised of 96% White, 2% Mexican-American, and 2% Asian, with 25% of the population comprised of low-income families. The attendance rate is 97% with 6% student mobility and no reported truancy for the 1996 school year.

The total number of certified, full-time staff members is twelve, including five regular education teachers, two special education teachers, one Title I/Reading Recovery teacher, two pre-school teachers, one parent/school facilitator, and one administrator. The average number of years of teaching experience is twelve, with 83%

of the teachers holding bachelor's degrees and 17% holding master's degrees. Both the certified and non-certified staff members are 100% White.

Each self-contained classroom provides an objective-based curriculum for language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science/health. Other subjects are taught by certified staff which includes an art teacher servicing the targeted school one day per week with forty minutes per class per week, a music teacher servicing the site one and a half days per week with thirty minutes per class twice a week, and two physical education instructors providing services for all students twenty-five minutes per day. A guidance counselor and a social worker each service the site one day per week, and a teacher of the gifted and talented two mornings per week. A district nurse is available as needed. Speech and language services, occupational therapy, and physical therapy are provided through contracted professionals to provide for the students with special needs housed at the targeted school.

Full-time, non-certified support staff includes a secretary, a custodian, a library clerk, one pre-school classroom aide, two special education classroom aides, and three one-on-one student aides. Part-time support staff includes two pre-kindergarten classroom aides, two one-on-one student aides, two lunch servers, and two lunchroom/playground supervisors. The majority of staff members are female. Male members consist of the principal, the physical education teachers, and the custodian.

The targeted school has a learning center with a collection of over 6,000 volumes. The computer lab contains twenty-five Pentium Compaq computers networked together, one of which has a CD-ROM. Each classroom has a CD-ROM computer connected to the network. There is no Internet access in the building.

Perhaps the most unique characteristic of the targeted school is the substantial number of students with significant special needs in the K-4 program. Special needs students comprise 14% of the population. There are 22 instructional LD/EMH students

who are partially mainstreamed into regular classes according to the requirements of each of their Individual Educational Plans. One student uses an electric wheelchair and one uses a walker. The facility has an automatic door opener, and a wall-mounted mat to provide for their physical needs. Some computer equipment is also available for their use such as a specialized keyboard. The building administrator is also the head of special education for the district.

Site B

Site B is a kindergarten through fourth grade attendance center that houses 229 students. The students feed into the targeted school from one community, and approximately 20% of the students are bussed to school from outlying subdivisions and farms. The student enrollment is comprised of 99% White, and less than 1% each of Black, Mexican-American, and Asian. The targeted school population includes 16% of the students from low-income families. The attendance rate is 96% with 13% student mobility and no reported truancy for the 1996 school year.

The total number of certified, full-time staff members working in the targeted school is 15, which includes one administrator. Other certified staff includes a guidance counselor and a teacher of the gifted and talented, each servicing the site one day per week. Three full-time and three part-time, non-certified staff aides complete the remainder of the staff. The combined certified and non-certified staff is 97% White and 1% Mexican-American. The average number of years of teaching experience is 19 with 72% of the teachers holding a bachelor's degree and 28% a master's degree. The teacher to pupil ratio is 21:1 (School Report Card, 1996).

The targeted K-4 building houses two kindergarten, two first grade, two second grade, two third grade, and two fourth grade classes. Each self-contained classroom provides an objective-based curriculum for language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science/health. In addition, a full-day Remedial Reading/Title I program includes a

Reading Recovery Program for identified first graders. A full-day resource learning disabilities program and junior first grade service the entire district and are located in the targeted school. This junior first grade program provides a year of growth for students who have completed kindergarten but are not ready for first grade placement.

Physical education meets daily for twenty-five minutes, art for one forty-minute period per week, and music for two thirty-minute periods per week. The services of a school counselor, social worker, nurse, and speech/language therapist are available for teachers to use in assisting the special needs of the students. The targeted school has a learning center with a full-time library/computer aide and a collection of over 10,000 volumes. A computer lab is equipped with twenty-five 286 IBM computers networked together and one 486 computer with a CD-ROM used as a stand-alone station. There is no Internet access available in the building.

Site C

Site C is a middle school for fifth and sixth grade classes. The enrollment is 264 with 98% White, 1% Mexican-American, and 1% Asian/Pacific Islander. Students identified as coming from low-income homes make up 17% of the school population, and no student is listed as being limited in English proficiency. Attendance figures show a positive profile. The student attendance rate of 96% also has no chronic truancy (School Report Card, 1996).

The school has an average class size of 23 students in a departmentalized setting. The core subjects are reading, English, math, social studies, science, and physical education. In addition students also are exposed to various exploratory subjects which include art, drama, career, dance and public speaking. They also have the opportunity to participate in choir and band.

The one-level brick school built in the 1950's has become overcrowded. To alleviate this, four temporary classrooms were added this year. Several staff members

and some classrooms are shared with a connecting school. The school has its own learning center with over 6,000 volumes and a full-time library aide. There is one computer laboratory with 30 IBM stations which are networked. Only one office within the building has access to the Internet.

The staff is composed of 18 full-time certified staff, with some of those being shared during the school day with the adjoining school. Among those certified staff members the average teaching experience is 16 years. Only two members of the staff have a master's degree, while the others have a bachelor's degree. There is one full-time principal, a library aide, and a shared guidance counselor. Other support staff for students with special needs are scheduled into the building as required.

The Surrounding Community

The community setting is a rural Midwestern county seat of 7,200 people. The students from two nearby smaller communities have recently been annexed into the elementary district. The community, which is over one hundred years old, prides itself on its local history and the quality of life for its citizens. In order to maintain that pride the performance of the schools is very important. In addition to the public elementary schools, the community houses two private elementary schools and a public high school. The citizens tend to be middle class of almost entirely European descent. A rather conservative political and economic attitude prevails in this community which has nineteen houses of worship.

The economic base for the area is primarily agricultural and light manufacturing. An increasing amount of tourism and service industry is evident. Sales tax revenue continues to grow. In 1989 the average household income for the city is reported as $32,029 (1990 Census Report).

As reported in the 1996 School Report Card, the local elementary school district consists of six attendance centers with one of those centers being in a nearby

community. There are three school buildings designated for kindergarten through fourth grade classes, one for kindergarten through sixth grade classes, one for fifth through sixth grade classes, and one for seventh through eighth grade classes. The total student population in the district remains fairly stable and is currently at 1, 250.

Within the elementary district 98% of the students are White, 1% Black, 1% Mexican-American, and 1% Asian/Pacific Islander with 15% of the total student population being considered low-income. The 73 teachers reflect nearly the same ethnicity with 98% being White and the rest being either Mexican-American or Asian/Pacific Islander. Male teachers make up 19% of the faculty, and 81% are female.

The average teaching experience of the district's teachers is 17 years. Because of the commuting distance to a major university to complete graduate work, the district's number of teachers with a master's degree is much below the state average, and therefore, the salaries also tend to be much lower. The average salary for 1995-96 is reported as $33, 429.

Each attendance center in the district has its own principal with one principal being female. The pupil-administrator ratio is 179:1. The administrator salary, including various monetary benefits and compensation, averages $53,896 for the 1994-95 school year. The operating expenditure per pupil in 1994-95 is reported as $3,896, more than $2,000 below the state average. The total expenditure for the district in 1994-95 is $5,169, 639.

National Context of the Problem

The problem of motivating students to read independently has generated concern at the national level. This concern focuses on the problems of decreasing amounts of family support, increasing competition from other interests, and inadequate skills for many of the nation's students.

In our American society the support from parents in helping to develop independent readers continues to decline. The young child's most powerful model is a parent. If the child sees the parent reading for enjoyment and shares the experience by reading to him, a desire for reading is instilled.

But many parents are not comfortable reading to their children, and many more do not have the time. During a study by Greaney and Hegarty (as cited in Pardon, 1996), a targeted group of children who are frequent readers was asked to indicate factors that influenced their reading. They responded that over half of their parents had listened to them read at least five times a week, and 40% of the parents frequently conversed with their children about books they had read.

Our society is one of working parents, many times with multiple part-time jobs that take numerous hours away from their children. Single parents, as well as two-parent families, lack time and energy to involve and encourage reading in the home. There is often a lack of reading material in the home, even as basic as daily newspapers. The strongest relationship found between independent reading and parent involvement is the amount of encouragement parents give their children, specifically in reading (Pardon, 1996).

Independent reading is also often hampered by the natural social maturation process of students. As the students grow older, their interests, activities, and socializing impede the desire for independent reading, usually at the seventh and eighth grade levels (McCoy, 1991). Parental, peer, or self-pressure to join in a number of organized sports and/or cultural activities supersedes the time that was formerly spent on independent reading. The advent of technology has distracted students farther away from independent reading. According to Ronald Lange (1994), children have been attracted regularly to modern technology and media, outside interests and activities, and distractions from home and society. Results from surveys indicate that students are

more intrigued with watching television, listening to music, or participating in sports and hobbies than in independent reading (Voorhees, 1993). The advent of video games and Internet availability has also added to the technology and media distractions.

Finally, too many children lack the necessary skills to enjoy reading as a recreational pastime. Children with reading deficits tend to avoid reading as much as possible. In recent months President Clinton has been calling for national action to ensure that children receive the necessary skills to become independent readers by Grade 3. Part of his suggested plan asks for teams of volunteers to attack the national need to develop independent, motivated readers (Burby, 1996).

Many incentive programs designed to provide the means to develop both intrinsic and extrinsic forces to drive a student towards independent reading fail to produce the desired effects. "They often fail to benefit the reader who needs the program most - the poor reader" (Ford & Ohlhausen, 1988).

Skills must be developed in order to hope that children will subscribe to a lifelong habit of recreational reading. Without that habit, the performance in other subjects is likely to suffer as well. Studies suggest that increased independent reading is correlated to improvement even in math skills (Cutts, 1993).

Given the changes in American society resulting in less parental involvement with their children's reading habits, the increase in outside, technical and media distractions, and the decrease in reading skills, schools must strive to provide the means for all children to realize the route to a lifetime of education--the development of independent reading habits.

CHAPTER 2

PROBLEM DOCUMENTATION

Problem Evidence

The targeted groups of second, third, and sixth grade students show a need for increased awareness of literature and positive attitudes toward reading. To document this need, surveys given to students and parents were compiled. There were 20 participating students in 2nd grade, 21 students in 3rd grade, 19 students in 6th grade class A, and 16 students in 6th grade class B. The 6th grade class A is composed of students who are characterized as strong achievers. Some of these students also have strong ability. The 6th grade class B needs work on basic skills and has been identified as having low achievement scores.

Surveys for the students (Appendixes A, B, and C) and parents (Appendix D) were used to gather information on attitude toward leisure time reading and awareness of literature. The results of the student responses have been summarized in the following tables and bar graphs. The results of both of these tables are shown in percentages. The parent survey responses are summarized in narrative form.

Parent Survey Results

The Parent Survey forms were either given directly to parents/guardians or mailed to their homes at the beginning of the school year (Appendix D). All households were supplied with stamped self-addressed envelopes so they could respond anonymously to the survey. Families replied at a much greater rate at the elementary level than at the sixth grade level. Second grade had fourteen out of twenty for a 70 percent return rate. Third grade had sixteen out of twenty for an 80 percent rate of return. The sixth grade return rate for class A was 52 percent with ten out of nineteen

responses, while class B had only four responses out of sixteen for 25 percent rate of return. There is a concern at the sixth grade level with the validity of the findings due to the poor rate of response.

All parents indicated there was some adult role modeling of leisure time reading each day. Few reported that their child failed to read some each day. The younger students tended to engage in reading at between five to ten minutes daily, whereas sixth graders show a range from none up to sixty minutes.

Students' homes reflect a wide variety of reading materials available. A significant number of second and third grade children are read to daily, but by sixth grade this habit is almost non-existent.

Parents report high interest in humorous stories and animal stories at the lower grades with third graders developing an interest in chapter books and magazines. Sixth graders show a strong interest in mystery, humor, chapter books, and magazines. A high number of families reported they hold public library cards, but few families use it on a frequent basis.

Home chores are the most often checked cause that prevents parents from engaging in leisure time reading. Many activities occupy the students' time outside of school, with sports, television, dance/music, video/computer, and play important at all levels.

In reporting specifically how much time is spent watching television/video daily, results show lower grade students tend to watch one to two hours daily, and sixth graders watch between thirty minutes to two hours. The amount of time watching television overall greatly exceeds time spent reading leisurely.

Analysis of Reading Attitude Survey

A summary of the Reading Attitude Survey (Appendix A) administered to second grade is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

2nd Grade Pre-intervention Reading Attitude Survey Results

	% Strongly Agree	% Agree	% Disagree	% Strongly Disagree
A. Reading on a rainy day	25	35	20	20
B. Reading in school during free time	30	25	25	20
C. Reading for fun at home	45	30	20	5
D. Getting a book for a present	45	40	10	5
E. Spending free time reading	20	15	35	30
F. Starting a new book	55	25	5	15
G. Reading during summer vacation	45	10	5	40
H. Reading instead of playing	5	15	35	45
I. Going to a book store	50	30	0	20
J. Reading different kinds of books	35	30	15	20

N=20

According to the Reading Attitude Survey (McKenna and Kear, 1990) used to measure student interest in recreational reading, 65 percent of the 2nd graders expressed little or no desire to spend their general free time reading, and 85 percent would not select reading as an activity over playing. Even on a rainy day 40 percent of students stated they would not select reading as an activity. Reading over summer vacation was not selected as a desired activity by 45 percent of students. Regarding use of free time at school 45 percent did not select reading as a desired activity. However, 75 percent of students surveyed did state that they read for fun at home, while 80 percent enjoyed going to a book store. Eighty-five percent liked getting books as gifts, and 65 percent enjoyed reading different kinds of books.

This survey reveals that the students are somewhat ambivalent toward reading. Though most enjoy going to a book store and getting books as gifts, free time spent

playing was by far the choice over time spent in leisure time reading. Perhaps at 2nd grade this is to be expected. As they become more confident readers, they may be more inclined to select reading as a preferred activity. These data are illustrated in Figure 1.

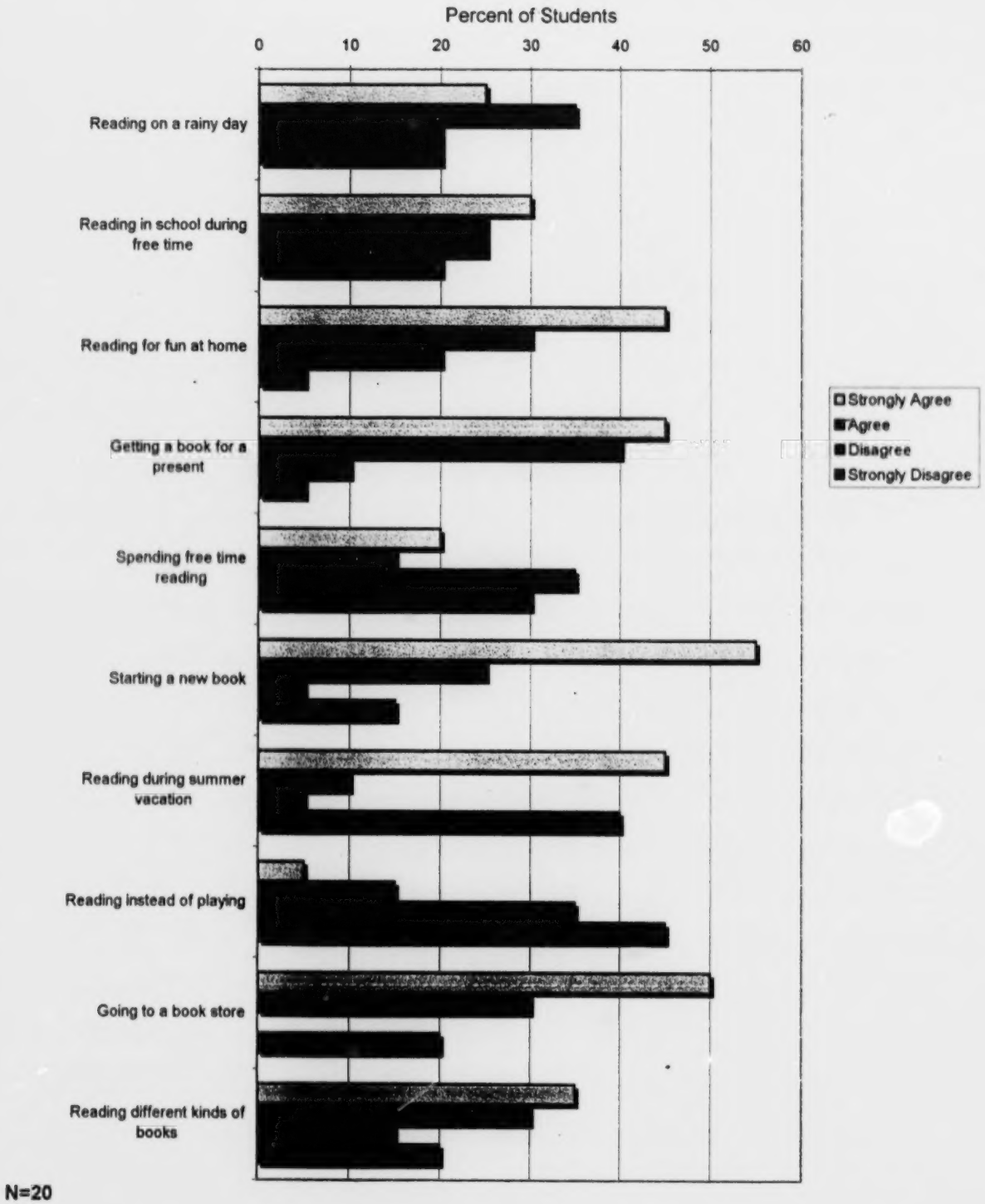


Figure 1. 2nd grade pre-intervention reading attitude survey results.

A summary of the Reading Attitude Survey (Appendix A) administered to third grade is presented in Table 2.

Table 2

3rd Grade Pre-intervention Reading Attitude Survey Results

	% Strongly Agree	% Agree	% Disagree	% Strongly Disagree
A. Reading on a rainy day	60	30	0	10
B. Reading in school during free time	85	10	0	5
C. Reading for fun at home	70	15	15	0
D. Getting a book for a present	90	5	0	5
E. Spending free time reading	35	40	25	0
F. Starting a new book	80	15	5	0
G. Reading during summer vacation	40	40	5	15
H. Reading instead of playing	25	30	25	20
I. Going to a book store	80	20	0	0
J. Reading different kinds of books	75	20	0	5

N=20

According to the data for 3rd Grade regarding student interest in recreational reading, most children would choose reading on a rainy day, but almost 45 percent would rather play than read. In their free time 75 percent choose to read with 85 percent reading at home. Reading during summer vacation is somewhat appealing, while receiving a book for a present and going to the book store are very popular with this third grade class. These data are illustrated in Figure 2.

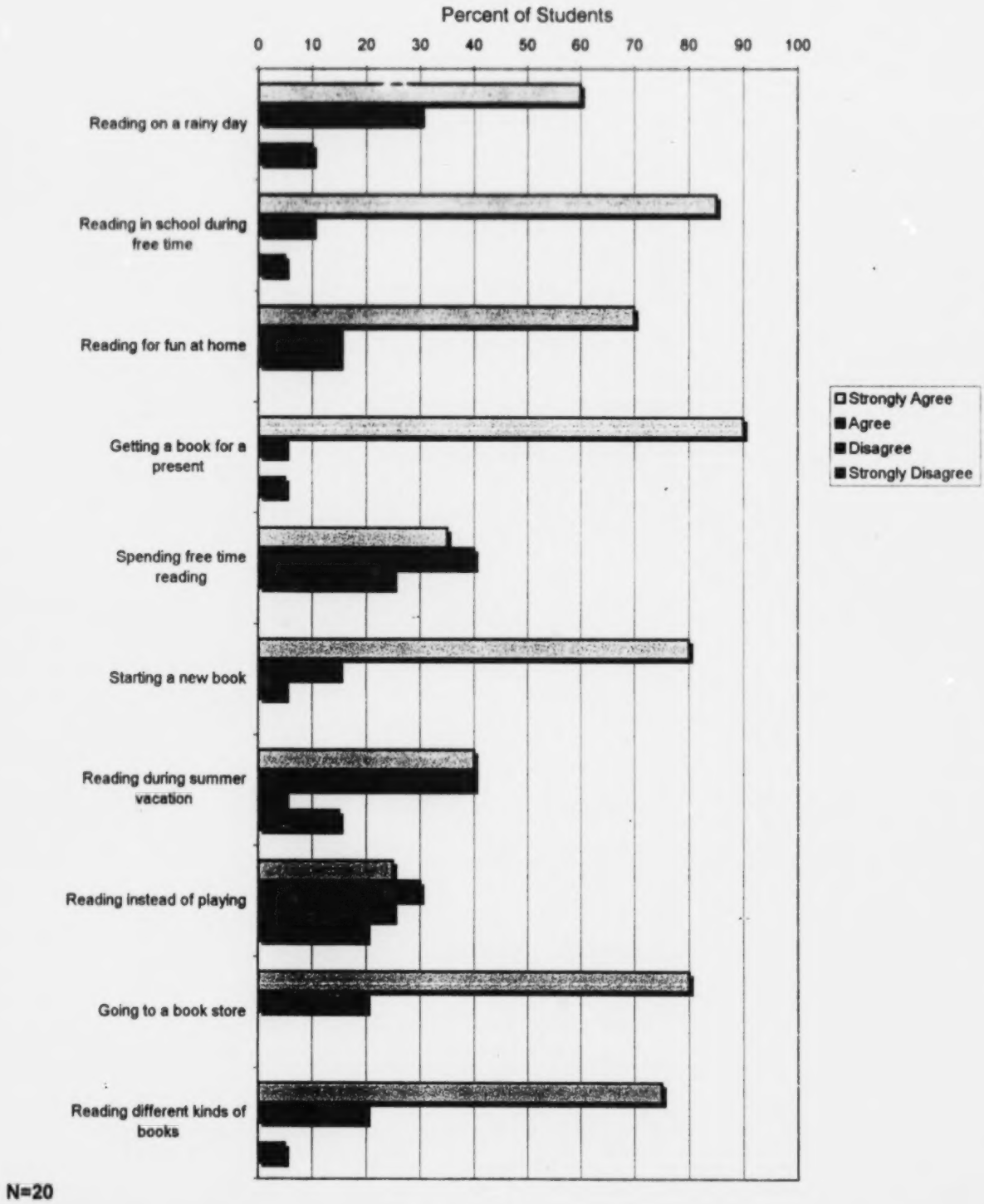


Figure 2. 3rd grade pre-intervention reading attitude survey results.

A summary of the Reading Attitude Survey (Appendix A) administered to sixth grade class A is presented in Table 3.

6th Grade Class A Pre-intervention Reading Attitude Survey Results

	% Strongly Agree	% Agree	% Disagree	% Strongly Disagree
A. Reading on a rainy day	37	53	5	5
B. Reading in school during free time	53	37	5	5
C. Reading for fun at home	32	53	11	5
D. Getting a book for a present	42	37	21	0
E. Spending free time reading	47	37	11	5
F. Starting a new book	84	5	5	5
G. Reading during summer vacation	26	53	16	5
H. Reading instead of playing	5	42	32	21
I. Going to a book store	58	32	11	0
J. Reading different kinds of books	63	32	0	5

N=19

In 6th grade class A the student attitudes were overall more positive toward recreational reading than not, except in the attitude of reading instead of playing. The greatest agreement was in the area of reading different kinds of books. No students strongly disagreed with getting a book as a present or going to a book store. Summer vacation reading was viewed as acceptable by 79 percent of students. These data are illustrated in Figure 3.

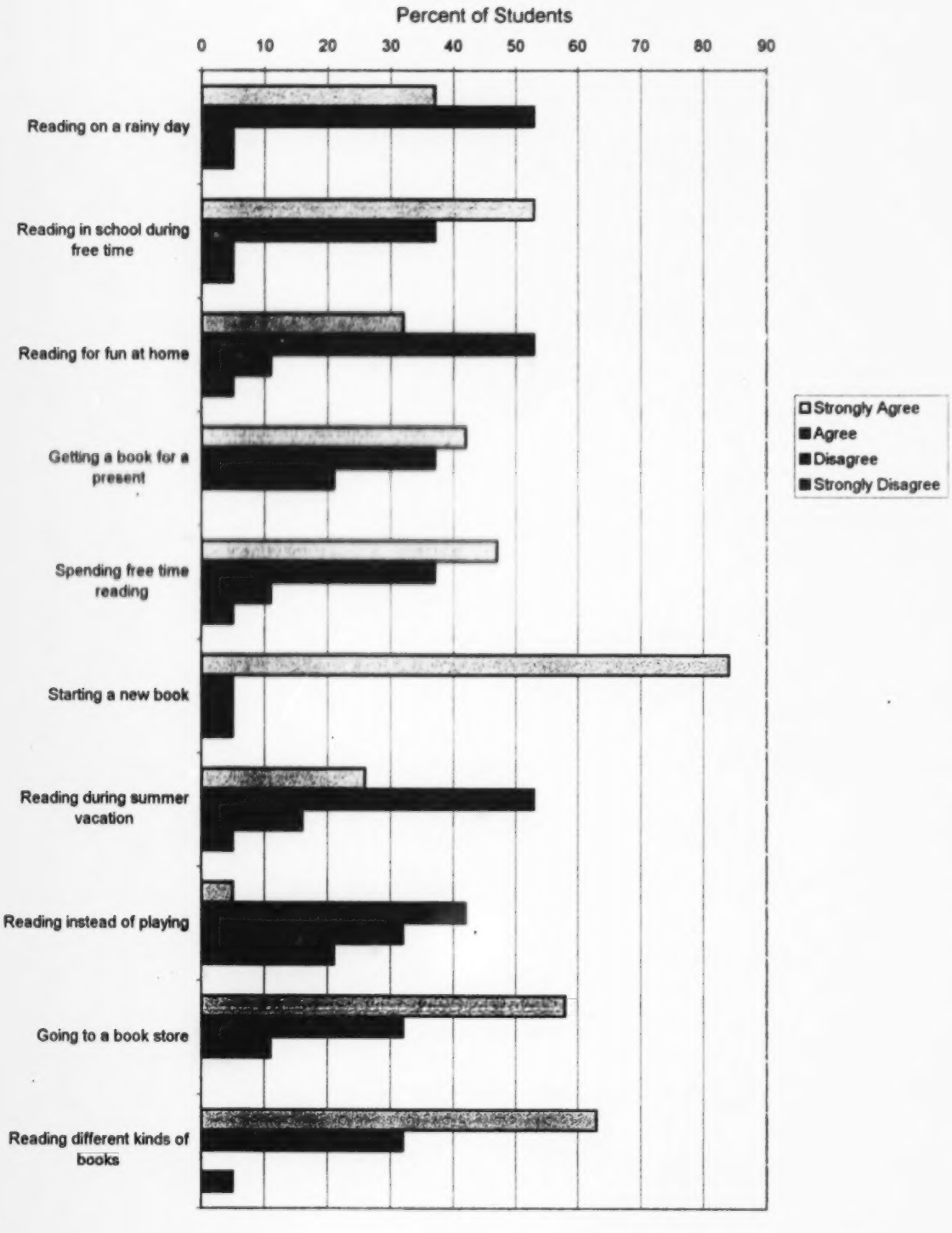


Figure 3. 6th grade, class A, pre-intervention reading attitude survey results.

A summary of the Reading Attitude Survey (Appendix A) administered to sixth grade class B is presented in Table 4.

Table 4

6th Grade Class B Pre-intervention Reading Attitude Survey Results

	% Strongly Agree	% Agree	% Disagree	% Strongly Disagree
A. Reading on a rainy day	0	44	13	44
B. Reading in school during free	13	29	38	19
C. Reading for fun at home	0	50	29	19
D. Getting a book for a present	13	44	29	13
E. Spending free time reading	0	44	25	31
F. Starting a new book	25	44	13	19
G. Reading during summer vacati	6	6	19	69
H. Reading instead of playing	0	6	6	88
I. Going to a book store	38	38	13	13
J. Reading different kinds of book	13	44	38	6

N=16

Students in Class B were also generally leaning toward a positive side for recreational reading but never strongly agreed to the extent as class A. They were strongly opposed to reading at the expense of playing. Another strong negative attitude was reading during summer vacation. Only 12 percent found summer vacation reading acceptable. These data are illustrated in Figure 4.

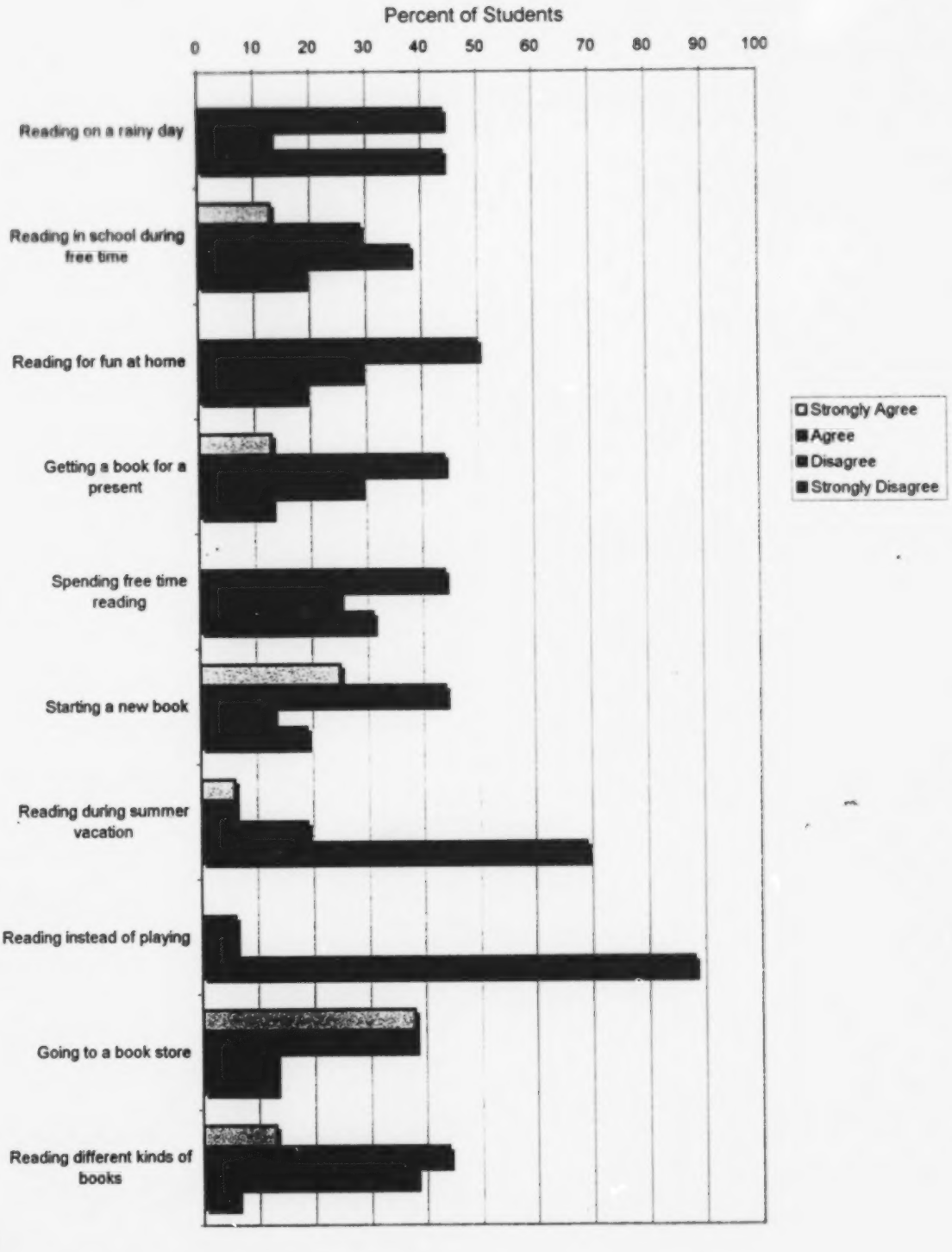


Figure 4. 6th grade, class B, pre-intervention reading attitude survey results.

Analysis of Literature Awareness Surveys

A summary of the Literature Awareness Survey (Appendix B) administered to second grade is presented in Table 5.

Table 5

2nd Grade Pre-intervention Literature Awareness Survey

Test Items Student Identifies:	% of Correct Responses
1. Title of fiction book	10
2. Poetry book	20
3. Poet	50
4. Author of fiction	15
5. Realistic fiction	35
6. Biography	90
7. Author of poetry	20
8. Title of mystery	75
9. Title of fairy tale	95
10. Title of information science	65

N=20

The Literature Awareness Survey given to the second grade students (Appendix B) shows the possibility of improvement in all areas. The fairy tale, biography, and mystery books were most accurately identified. Areas to strengthen are identifying books of poetry and fiction as well as identifying authors. These data are illustrated in Figure 5.

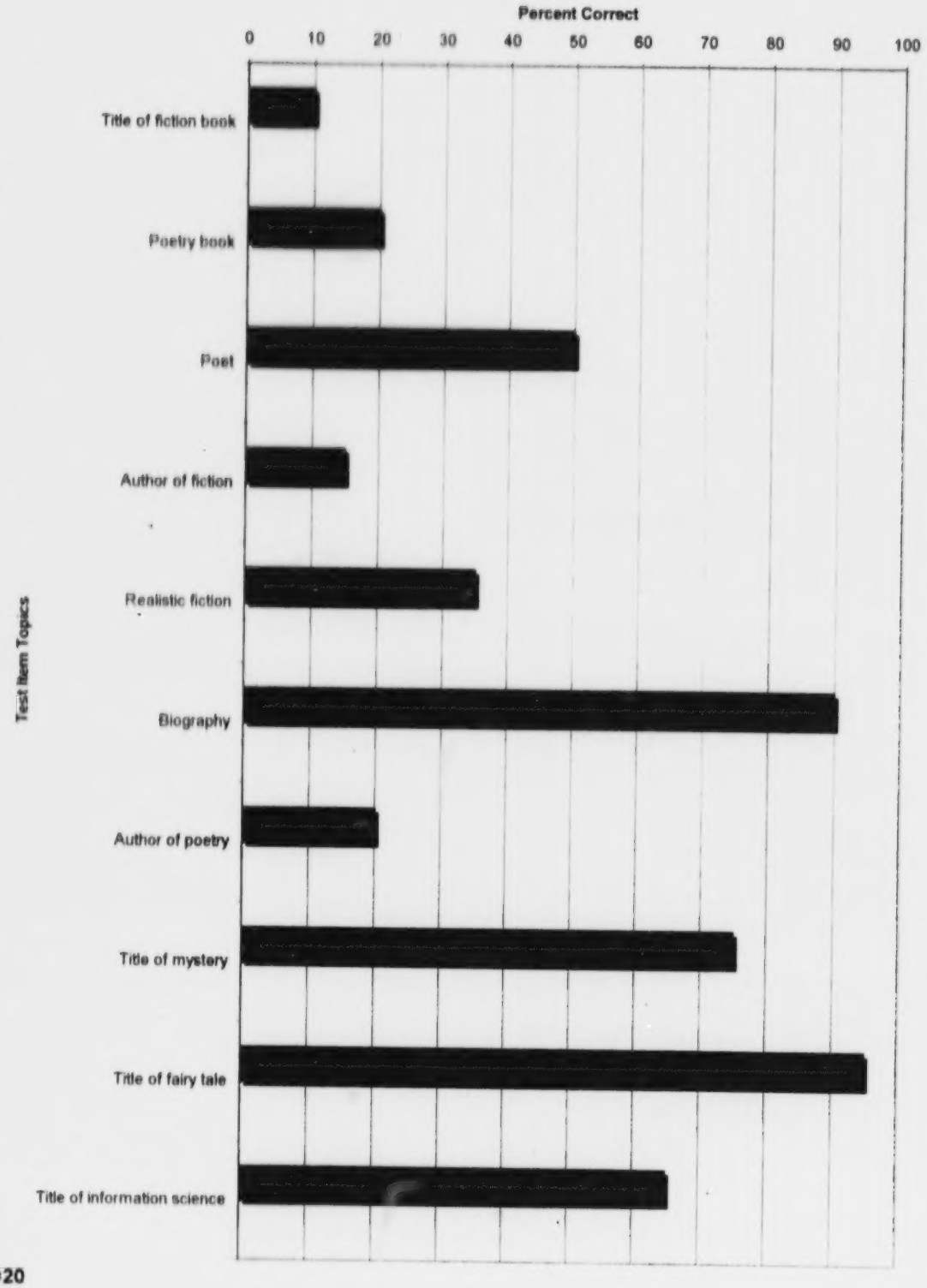


Figure 5. 2nd grade literature awareness pre-intervention survey results.

A summary of the Literature Awareness Survey (Appendix B) administered to third grade is presented in Table 6.

Table 6

3rd Grade Pre-intervention Literature Awareness Survey

Test Items Student Identifies:	% of Correct Responses
1. Title of fiction book	15
2. Poetry book	25
3. Poet	40
4. Author of fiction	25
5. Realistic fiction	70
6. Biography	80
7. Author of poetry	60
8. Title of mystery	80
9. Title of fairy tale	95
10. Title of information science	60

N=20

The Literature Awareness Survey given to the third grade students (Appendix B) shows the possibility of improvement in all areas. The fairy tale, biography, and mystery books were most accurately identified. Areas to strengthen are identifying books of poetry and fiction as well as identifying authors. These data are illustrated in Figure 6.

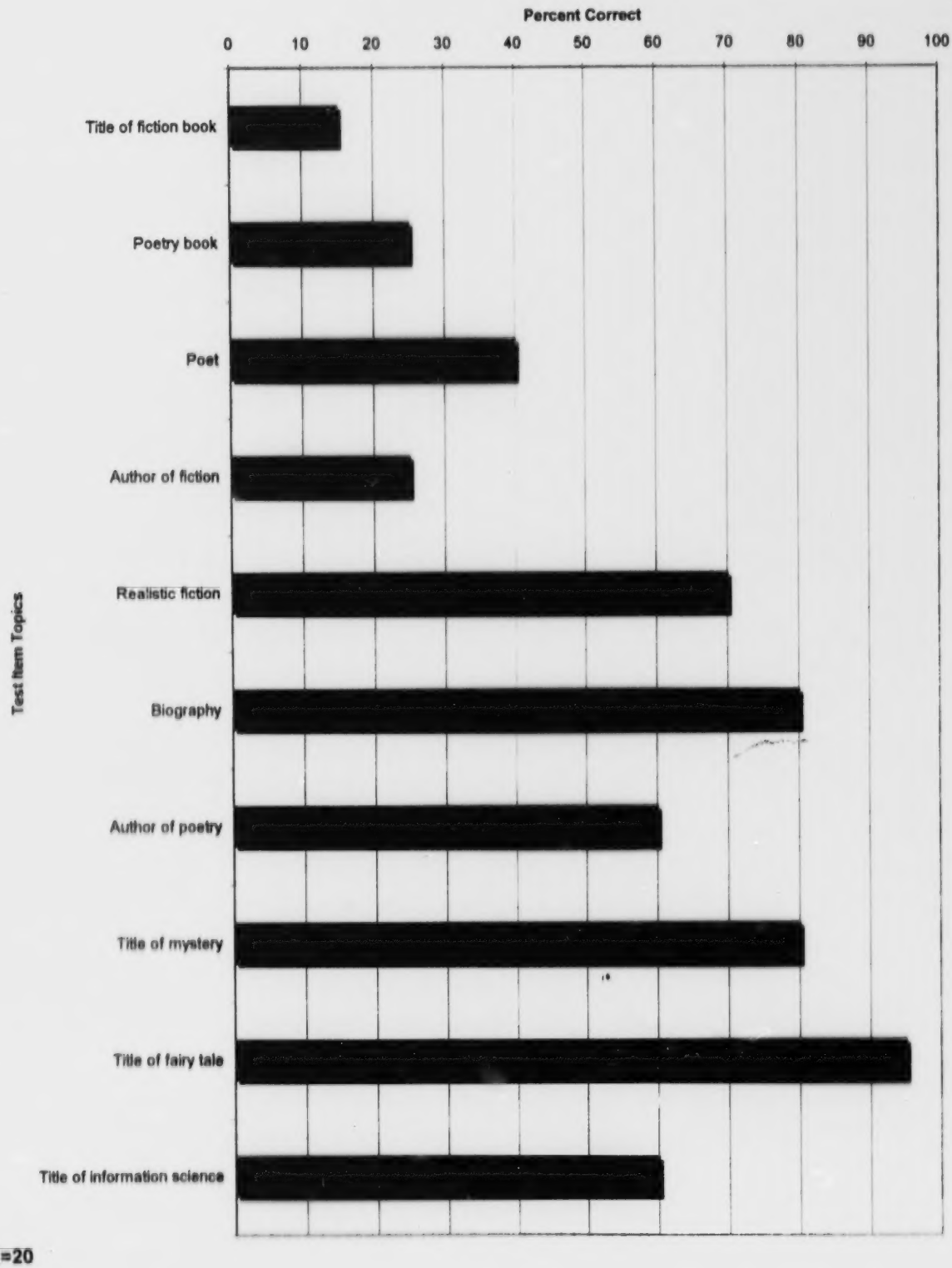


Figure 6. 3rd grade pre-intervention literature awareness survey results.

A summary of the Literature Awareness Survey (Appendix C) administered to sixth grade class A and class B is presented in Tables 7 and 8.

Table 7

6th Grade Class A Pre-intervention Literature Awareness Survey

Test Item Topic	% of Correct Responses
Poetry	95
Poet	100
Title	74
Title	74
Title	32
Realistic Fiction	74
Mystery	95
Fantasy	100
Author: Gary Paulson	100
Avi	16
Jean Fritz	89
Chris Van Allsburg	37
Lois Lowry	89
Virginia Hamilton	63
Matt Christopher	79
Ann M. Martin	84
Bill Wallace	63
Jack Prelutsky	79
Jon Scieszka	53
Laurence Yep	58

N=15

Table 8

6th Grade Class B Pre-intervention Literature Awareness Survey

Test Item Topic	% of Correct Responses
Poetry	38
Poet	63
Title	38
Title	6
Title	13
Realistic Fiction	56
Mystery	88
Fantasy	75
Author: Gary Paulson	81
Avi	25
Jean Fritz	75
Chris Van Allsburg	50
Lois Lowry	63
Virginia Hamilton	44
Matt Christopher	81
Ann M. Martin	69
Bill Wallace	75
Jack Prelutsky	81
Jon Scieszka	63
Laurence Yep	56

N=15

The Literature Awareness survey administered to the sixth grade (Appendix C) was a different form of the tool than was given to the lower grade students in order to reflect the books and authors important at this grade level. Class A results show no room for improvement on three test items, but class B could conceivably improve in all test areas. Gary Paulson was the most frequently identified author of those listed, and Avi was the author least known. These data are illustrated in Figures 7 and 8.

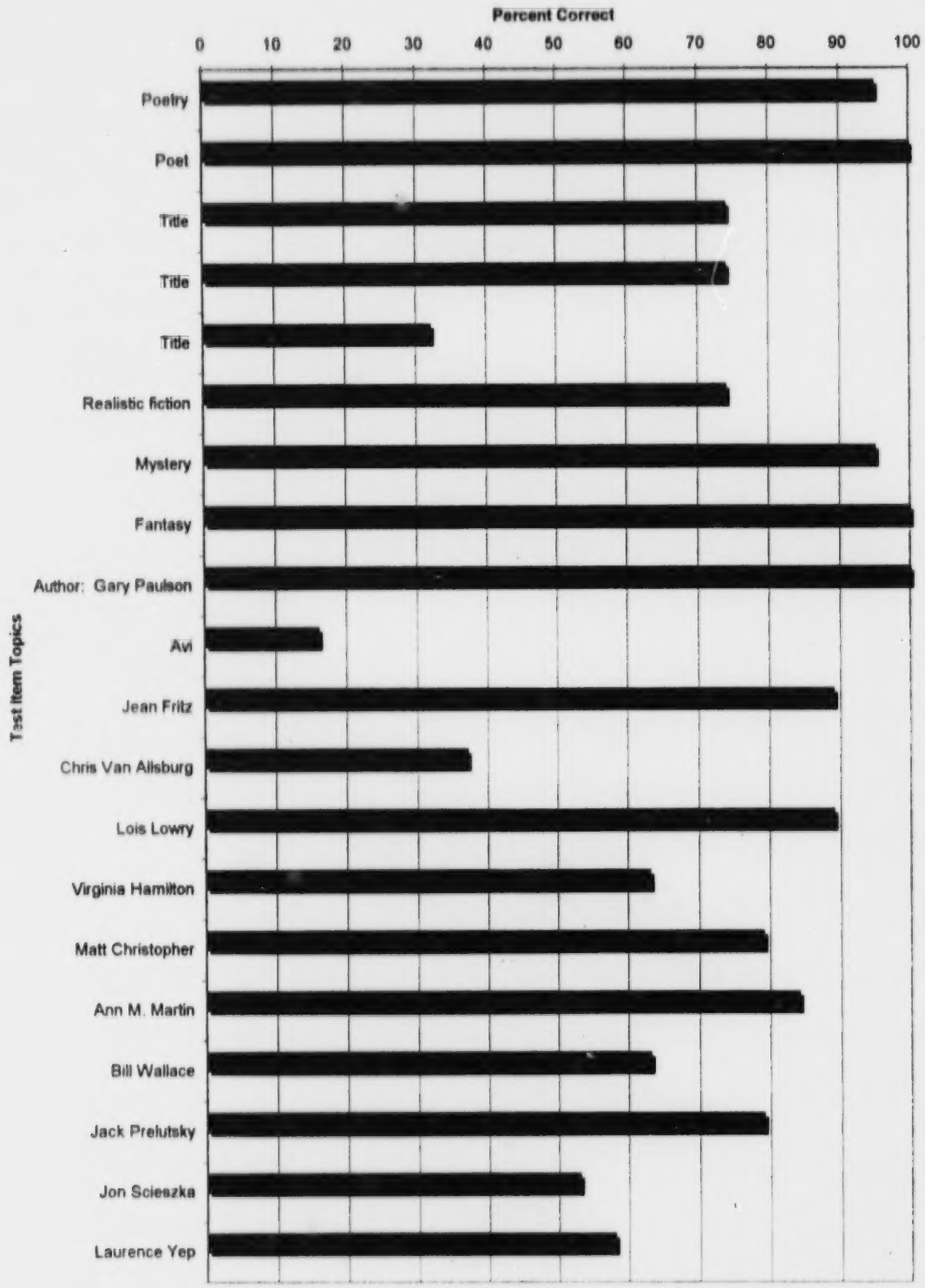


Figure 7. 6th grade, class A, literature awareness pre-intervention survey results.

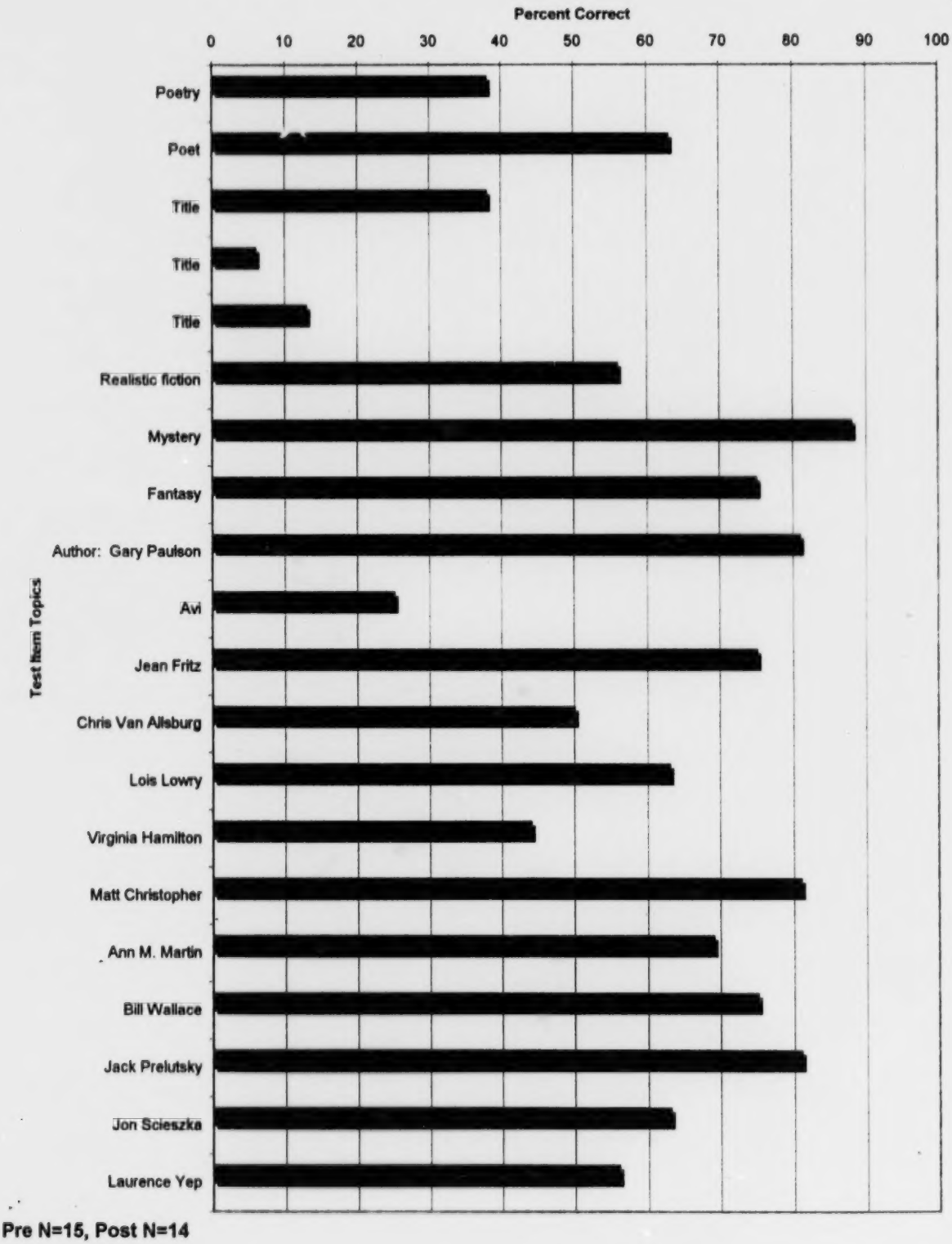


Figure 8. 6th grade, class B, literature awareness pre-intervention survey results.

Probable Causes

The professional literature suggests several underlying causes for inadequate levels of recreational reading. The demographic and economic changes in today's society show a dramatic increase in the number of households in which both parents work as well as in the number of single parent households. As a consequence of these changes, the adults in the home modeling reading for pleasure is on the decline (Bintz, Morrow, Reed, Spencer, Sullivan, as cited by Virgil, 1994). The lack of reading at home does not mean a child will not read recreationally, but it seems likely that without others setting an example, a child will not be motivated to read (Castle & Cramer, 1994). Greaney and Hegarty (1987) suggest that from a perspective of developing the leisure time reading habit, what parents "do" is more important than what they "are," and the emphasis placed on reading in the home and on academic and intellectual development is directly related to leisure time reading.

Furthermore, the literature discusses the lack of time adults and children have to read independently. Podl (1995) writes that other activities such as new friends, various media, and extra curricular events compete for time and attention, leaving limited recreational reading time. Whereas elementary children spend about 2.3 hours per day watching television, they devote an average of only eight minutes per day to leisure time reading (Koolstra & Vandervort,1996). New forms of electronic entertainment such as video and computer games may be diverting the attention of youth from books (Morrow & Weinstein, 1986). Research suggests that poor readers lack opportunities to practice reading, and that they are often in home environments that discourage reading (Stanovich as cited by Fredericks & Rasinski, 1991).

Self-confidence is a primary obstacle in the path of student motivation to approach the task of reading (Moniuszko, 1992). Podl (1995) states that students do not choose to read because they think they cannot read well. A child's lack of

self-confidence may be due to a number of causes. A lack of reading skills plunges children into a vicious cycle, according to Boxwill (as cited by Burby, 1996):

> They don't read much on their own, so they have difficulty with comprehension skills and vocabulary. Their problems with skills then lead to poor test results, and then they get stuck in a spiral that leads to less and less motivation to read. It's not that they can't read but that they do not have the understanding and analytical ability of a good reader. (p. BO1) .

Yet, Morrow and Weinstein (1986) cite both Lamme and Spiegel in stating that in order to address the lack of reading skills, many school based reading programs are skills-oriented, often resulting in little opportunity for students to read for enjoyment. According to Mayne (as cited by Castle & Cramer, 1994):

> It should be the teacher's aim to give every child a love for reading, a hunger for it that will stay with him through all the years of his life. If a child has that, he will acquire the mechanical part without difficulty. (p. 197)

The professional literature agrees that a disparity exists between what students are expected to read in the classroom and what they themselves would choose to read. Bintz (as cited by Virgil, 1994) argues that it stands to reason that if children are allowed more choices in what they read, then they will read more and learn more. According to Carlsen (as cited by Virgil, 1994. p.52), "If reading is to be kept alive, it seems imperative that time for free reading should be set aside as part of the school day." If we want students to become lifelong readers, it is critical they be given time for reading and choices about what to read (Virgil, 1994). Sanacore (1992, p. 474) feels that teachers are caught in a dilemma. He states, "While we know the importance of supporting lifetime literacy, we tend to become frustrated about not having enough time in school to attain this goal."

Why do children read recreationally? Are they intrinsically motivated or do a variety of extrinsic rewards motivate reading for pleasure? According to Berglund (1991), teacher controlled incentives are effective in encouraging some children to read. Individual differences in interest, performance, and ability are often ignored. Most often, the same incentive system is used for everyone, and students spend only enough time reading to earn a reward. Balajthy (1988) suggests that unimaginatively designed electronic programs turn recreational reading into worksheet-like drudgery. Deci, in an article by Guthrie and Sweet (1996), argues that students too easily become enamored with extrinsic motivators such as money or prizes. He maintains that the best results come from within, maintaining that reading is its own reward.

In conclusion, the local context and the professional literature have supplied numerous probable causes for inadequate levels of recreational reading. The probable causes include:

1. Parents and other adults are not sufficiently providing recreational reading role models for children.
2. Schools and parents fail to devote time to leisure reading.
3. Students lack reading skills and confidence to read independently.
4. Homes and classrooms do not provide a wide variety of reading materials for student choice.
5. In many cases, extrinsic rewards used to motivate reading do not lead to intrinsic desire for recreational reading.

CHAPTER 3

SOLUTION STRATEGY

Literature Review

Several solutions are presented in current professional literature for the development of an enjoyment of recreational reading that might lead to a lifelong independent reading habit. Primarily these solutions center around the need to recognize individual student differences, the need for social interaction, the need to provide effective adult role models, and the need to give students time to develop good reading habits within the school setting.

Too often teachers have selected the reading material for students to read either through using a basal reading series or restricting reading to a particular genre or list of titles. Although there are values to both methods, using either method to excess fails to recognize the students' need to choose. Atwell states, "I heard again and again from students of every ability that freedom of choice had turned them into readers" (1987, p. 161). The importance of choice in motivating reading is noted in various studies (Deci & Ryan, Schiefele, Spaulding, Turner, as cited by Gambrell, 1996). In order to provide for this need a teacher must have readily available material for the students. Sanacore states (1992):

> Clutter up the classroom. Surrounding students with books, newspapers, magazines, etc., will tempt them to browse and read some of them... Providing students with widely varying reading materials and respecting their choices are important because reasons other than literary merit seem to be associated with desire to read. As readers gain experience reading for

> pleasure, they tend to select appropriate materials. This positive experience with reading builds independence and self-esteem, both important for creating lifelong readers (p. 474-477).

Either the student should be granted frequent opportunities to use the school library or a wide variety of reading choice should be available within the classroom (Pardon, 1996). This material should accommodate the various reading ability levels and interest levels of the classroom population. The material should be practical and relevant to the students. It should encompass a variety of genre, even including newspapers, recipes, and yellow pages (Cramer, 1993).

The ways that students have been asked to respond to the reading of independent material have also lacked variety and have failed to recognize individual preferences. A variety of choices of response should be offered by the teacher (Carbo & Cole, 1995). Although some students might enjoy a standard written book report format, a majority of students will prefer some other method of reporting. Researchers such as Gardner support the idea that individual strengths and differences exist within students. To recognize these multiple intelligences students should be given choices to respond such as journals, drama, art, poetry, or musical composition for example (Chapman, 1993).

Although some students are motivated by extrinsic programs, it is noted that other students are hindered by extrinsic motivation (Scott, 1997). Here again, the solution involves recognizing individual differences. Participating in extrinsic programs meets two of the eight distinct motivations for literacy, according to Guthrie and Sweet (1996): recognition and competition. For those students who need programs such as Pizza Hut's Book It or Advantage Learning Systems' Accelerated Reader, they can be short term motivators, but ideally intrinsic motivation must be developed.

Guthrie and Sweet (1996) state:

> There are places for both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations in every classroom. At times when skill building and behavior control are necessary, extrinsic incentives are useful. When higher order literacy and self-directed learning are desired, the importance of students' intrinsic motivation should increase. By aligning their motivational support system with their instructional practices, teachers can enhance the development of long-term literacy engagement. (p. 662)

Another identified need for young people is the need for social interaction. When setting up a program to motivate students, teachers should design a program to accommodate the students' pleasure in interacting with their peers (Davis, 1994; Shiring,1990). These opportunities could include reading/ discussion groups, reading buddies, older/younger students pairing up, as well as oral book responses such as dramas, debates, or explanations for art work that reflect upon the reading material. By sharing a presentation with a group or the whole class a student might inspire others in the class to read something (Pardon, 1996).

Students benefit from having role models that show enjoyment in leisure time reading. These role models can be teachers, parents, community members, family members, or peers. According to Becher as cited by Owens (1993):

> Reading aloud to children also promotes a bond between children and their adult readers, creates and develops shared topics of interest and familiarizes children with a variety of language patterns. These reading events also increase children's general interest in books and establish reading as a valued personal activity: two benefits that are likely to encourage children to become lifelong readers (p. 7).

During the school day students need to observe teachers showing excitement and pleasure in leisure reading. The teachers should share reactions and responses. The teachers should read aloud to the students (Gambrell, 1996; Pardon, 1996). In a study by Watson (1987), he reports that in interviewing eighty college students about what made reading enjoyable in their elementary years, their responses supported the importance of teachers reading aloud. Also children are more likely to develop a reading habit if the enjoyment of that habit is modeled and encouraged by others in the home (Carbo & Cole, 1995).

Parents can further help develop a positive attitude towards independent reading by giving books as gifts and visiting libraries with the child. A parent's interaction with the child about what is read is also valuable according to studies by Nebor (1986) and Pickles-Thomas (1992). By involving parents in the school reading program, it is believed that they will be more likely to support home reading activities (Fredericks & Rasinski, 1989).

Finally a major consideration for solving the problem is to supply the student with enough time during the school day to be meaningfully engaged in the reading process. In studies involving various age groups, the importance of providing silent reading within the school day has been noted. Melody (1987) reports success with second and third grade readers using sustained silent reading. In a study of seventy-five sixth and seventh graders, students grouped homogeneously in remedial, average, or enrichment classes, Voorhees (1993) states that a program focused on increasing recreational reading in school includes sustained silent reading as a key activity. By reducing the time spent in the classroom on workbook activities opportunities can be gained for more meaningful reading. If the classroom teacher can provide time for sustained silent

reading while also modeling an enjoyment of leisure reading within the school setting, this allowance might be the most important strategy for solving the problem of how to encourage a love for independent reading.

Project Objectives and Processes

As a result of implementing curricular changes and teaching strategies, during the months of September, 1997 to January, 1998, the students of the targeted second, third, and sixth grade classes will show increased levels of leisure time reading and heightened awareness of age and ability appropriate literature. These gains will be measured by surveying students about reading attitudes (Appendix A), testing students regarding literacy awareness (Appendixes B and C), surveying parents about family reading habits (Appendixes D and J) and through journal observations by the teachers.

Process Statements

1. Sustained Silent reading periods will be incorporated within the school day.
2. Student choice of literature and response activities will be provided.
3. Motivational strategies such as incentive programs, including parental involvement and other adult role models will be included within the classroom.

Action Plan

The project will begin with the collection of a variety of literature for each researcher's classroom representing a wide range of interest, ability level, and genre. These reading materials will supplement what is also available to the students for individual borrowing from the school library. Both the community librarians and the school librarians will be notified of the scope and goals of the project and their support and involvement will be solicited. Arrangements with the librarians will also be made in the researchers' names to maximize the amount of borrowing in order to ensure that enticing reading material is always available. Research supports the idea that a wealth of reading selections should be available. In the lower grade classrooms, selected

cartoons and appropriate news events will be clipped and organized from the newspapers in a user friendly format; whereas at the sixth grade level entire newspapers will be available on a daily basis.

A survey (Appendix D) will be distributed to the parents at the beginning of the school year to gather information to acquaint the researchers with the home environments of the students in regards to the attitudes, role modeling, and materials within the home that would contribute to leisure time reading. This survey will be accompanied with a cover letter (Appendix H) to inform the families of the students of the purposes and goals of the project. The parents will be asked for input of ideas and will be given an opportunity to select some ways that they might be able to lend support.

In the first few days of the school year, the students will be observed in order to notice whatever leisure time reading habits might already be in place. While awaiting the opening of the school libraries, the students will be told they may bring free reading material from home to read or they may borrow books from the classroom to use during opportune times. The researchers will begin to read aloud to their pupils as early in the year as possible.

Within the month of September the students will be given the Reading Attitude Survey (Appendix A) and the literary awareness survey (Appendixes B and C). These surveys will serve as pretests for measurement before the implementation of the project. All surveys will be anonymous.

Beginning in September an appropriate amount of sustained silent reading time will be provided on a daily basis ranging from ten to twenty minutes. Within this period of time all students will be expected to be focused upon reading material of their own choice. This reading may include read-along tapes or shared reading with another student or adult if such methods are necessary for success, interest, or cooperation. Students will also be allowed to participate in motivational programs if they so choose.

At the second and third grade levels, examples of extrinsic motivators include the Pizza Hut Book-It program, Accelerated Reader or Electronic Bookshelf, and motivation charts. In the sixth grade, examples include the Accelerated Reader, school store coupons, and motivational charts.

Either before or after sustained silent reading time, classroom teachers will read aloud for several minutes. Throughout the course of this project, a variety of both fiction and nonfiction selections will be read by the teachers in order to appeal to the diverse interests of the students (Appendix E). The teachers will model expressive delivery and dramatization techniques to captivate the listeners.

In addition, the teachers will also model different reading responses to the literature to introduce the students to a myriad of reporting options that they might employ to share with an audience (Appendix F). These reporting choices will be based on multiple intelligences and/or learning style interests. Research supports that in addition to having varied interests, students also have unique abilities and learning styles which should be considered. At scheduled times students will be expected to share, in a manner of their choice, some of the content they have recently enjoyed. These reports will include drawings, journals, poems, readings, drama, etc. This sharing recognizes the students' needs to interact socially regarding what they have read. This also benefits the other classmates as they gain ideas about new books to read from listening to others. It is expected that these sharing times will occur at least twice weekly.

For students who are reluctant to share within the classroom a conference will be held with the parent to elicit support. An activity or discussion about the reading with someone within the home can be substituted for the at-school report if necessary. It is hoped that parents will be supportive to help prepare their children for these reports. Other ways that the parents may help the project will include modeling leisure reading in

the home, showing interest in and excitement with material read by the child, taking the child to the public library, assisting the teachers or librarians as needs arise such as stocking shelves, listening to readers, tape recording, or constructing bulletin board displays.

So with an emphasis on student choice, as well as gaining the support and assistance of the parents, this intervention will provide an abundance of diverse reading material, quiet at-school reading opportunities, and a variety of motivational activities incorporating both intrinsic and extrinsic considerations.

This program will operate for research purposes into the month of January. At the conclusion of the study the results will be measured by using post tests of the same surveys administered in September (Appendixes A, B, C, and J). These results will be considered along with teacher observations and journal records to determine the success of the project. Both quantitative and qualitative analyses will be used.

Methods of Assessment

The data collection methods to be used in order to assess the effects of the intervention include administration of a parent survey of family reading habits both at the beginning and end of the intervention (Appendixes D and J) as well as the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (Appendix A) and a grade appropriate literature awareness survey (Appendixes B and C) to be administered to the students both at the beginning of the intervention and at its conclusion. Teacher journal entries regarding student reading habits and response activities will be kept throughout the intervention to document successes, failures, and changes that were necessary to make in the intervention plan.

CHAPTER 4

PROJECT RESULTS

Historical Description of Intervention

The objective of this project was to increase leisure time reading and to heighten student awareness of age and ability appropriate literature. In order to accomplish the desired change, students were presented with a variety of reading materials, daily sustained silent reading time, and a choice of multiple intelligence response activities (Appendix F).

Prior to the intervention both the city and school librarians were notified of the research project so that their support and cooperation would be secured. Permission was received from the librarians to check out large quantities of books for classroom use. In addition, parents were notified of the project and permission was gained to survey their children (Appendix G).

During the first week of the intervention data were collected in the following manner: parents were surveyed by mail (Appendix D) and students were surveyed both on reading attitude (Appendix A) and literature awareness (Appendixes B and C).

The intervention began with daily reading to the students. The purpose of this was to create enthusiasm for age appropriate literature. Following this, daily sustained silent reading time was provided along with a large variety of reading material that had been collected and made available for student use. While students were reading, teachers either modeled silent reading or monitored the reading selections. During the time of the intervention students were given the opportunity to participate in various incentive reading programs on a voluntary basis such as Pizza Hut Book-It program,

Accelerated Reader prize program, and the Rebecca Caudill reading list program. Reading incentive charts were displayed at all levels, and school store coupons were awarded at the sixth grade level.

Students were introduced to various ways that they could share books with others rather than the traditional book report summaries. These activity choices were designed to appeal to the multiple intelligences of the students and were referred to as book responses rather than book reports (Appendix F). Using familiar literature from the basal reading program, teachers modeled a variety of responses. Thus the students were provided with the instruction needed in order to be successful with their individual responses.

Parental involvement was encouraged by acquainting parents with ways they could assist their students. They were advised to help their child select ability appropriate books, to aid in creating the book responses, and to assist in budgeting their reading time. Parents were also encouraged to visit the class during sustained silent reading and response time, and to aid teachers and librarians in a variety of ways that would demonstrate support for leisure time reading.

At the conclusion of the intervention parent letters (Appendix I) were sent along with the parent post surveys (Appendix J) to determine if any changes in students' reading habits were noted. Both the Reading Attitude Survey (Appendix A) and the literature awareness surveys (Appendixes B and C) were re-administered to all students to measure changes resulting from the intervention.

Presentation and Analysis of Results

In order to assess the effects of increased leisure time reading among the targeted second, third, and sixth grade students, parent surveys (appendixes D and J) sent home before intervention and after were examined, reports of student pre and post

reading attitude and literature awareness surveys (Appendixes A, B, and C) were compared, and teacher journals of classroom observations were noted.

There were eleven out of twenty parent surveys completed at the second grade level for a return rate of 55 percent down from the initial 70 percent. According to the survey, parent modeling of reading increased slightly in the over 30 minutes per day category. Children's leisure time reading remained stable, averaging 15-30 minutes per day. Parents reported slightly less time listening to their children reading.

The types of reading material available in the home remained about the same. Parents noted, however, that their children's reading habits included an increase in selection of chapter books and a decrease in selection of easy reading books, while other categories remained stable. Fewer parents reported having and using a library card. Children's after school activities such as involvement in sports or time spent watching television remained basically unchanged.

At the end of the post survey, parents were asked if they had noticed any changes in their child's reading habits. Comments were received from seven of the eleven respondents (Appendix K). All but one reported positive results, either in time spent reading, the quality of reading, or the diversity of reading material.

Parent surveys were disappointing at the third grade level as approximately the same number of parents responded, and the change reported was insignificant. The only increase was in the number of minutes read at home. The responses indicated a slight increase in the fifteen to thirty minute category. Comments were received from nine of the sixteen respondents with all but three reporting positive results (Appendix L).

At the sixth grade level the intervention was conducted with two different reading classes, a high level class referred to as 6A and a low level class referred to as 6B. The intervention in both cases was limited to the regular forty-five minute class time designated for reading, and the intervention activities were substituted for traditional

reading instruction as often as possible while still trying to attend to the district curricular goals.

The anonymous surveys sent to parents from both classes received disappointing levels of participation by the parents. In 6A one more parent responded to the post intervention survey than to the pre-intervention survey, and in Class 6B the number of parents responding remained the same in both surveys. However, in all cases the response to the survey on the part of the parents was surprisingly low, about 50% in Class 6A and 25% in 6B. Due to the poor response, the usefulness of the assessment is questionable.

Analysis of Reading Attitude Survey

The data analysis for the Reading Attitude Survey (Appendix A) combines the positive responses of strongly agree and agree as well as the negative responses of disagree and strongly disagree. A summary of the survey administered to second grade is presented in Table 9.

Table 9

2nd Grade Reading Attitude Survey Results

	% Strongly Agree		% Agree		% Disagree		% Strongly Disagree	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
A. Reading on a rainy day	25	70	35	15	20	10	20	5
B. Reading in school during free time	30	55	25	25	25	20	20	0
C. Reading for fun at home	45	80	30	15	20	5	5	0
D. Getting a book for a present	45	65	40	15	10	20	5	0
E. Spending free time reading	20	50	15	20	35	20	30	10
F. Starting a new book	55	60	25	25	5	10	15	5
G. Reading during summer vacation	45	35	10	30	5	15	40	20
H. Reading instead of playing	5	30	15	20	35	20	45	30
I. Going to a book store	50	75	30	15	0	10	20	0
J. Reading different kinds of books	35	55	30	30	15	5	20	10

N=20

The second grade post survey results regarding reading attitude show a marked increase in positive attitude toward leisure time reading. Students reporting a willingness to engage in reading during leisure time increased from 35 percent to 70 percent. A full 50 percent indicated they would select reading over playing compared to 20 percent on the previous survey. Eighty-five percent of children reported enjoying reading different kinds of books as compared to 65 percent on the pre survey. The same increase was noted for reading on a rainy day. In fact, all areas of the survey increased in the positive range, except the desire to get a book for a present which decreased from 85 percent to 80 percent. These data are illustrated in Figure 9.

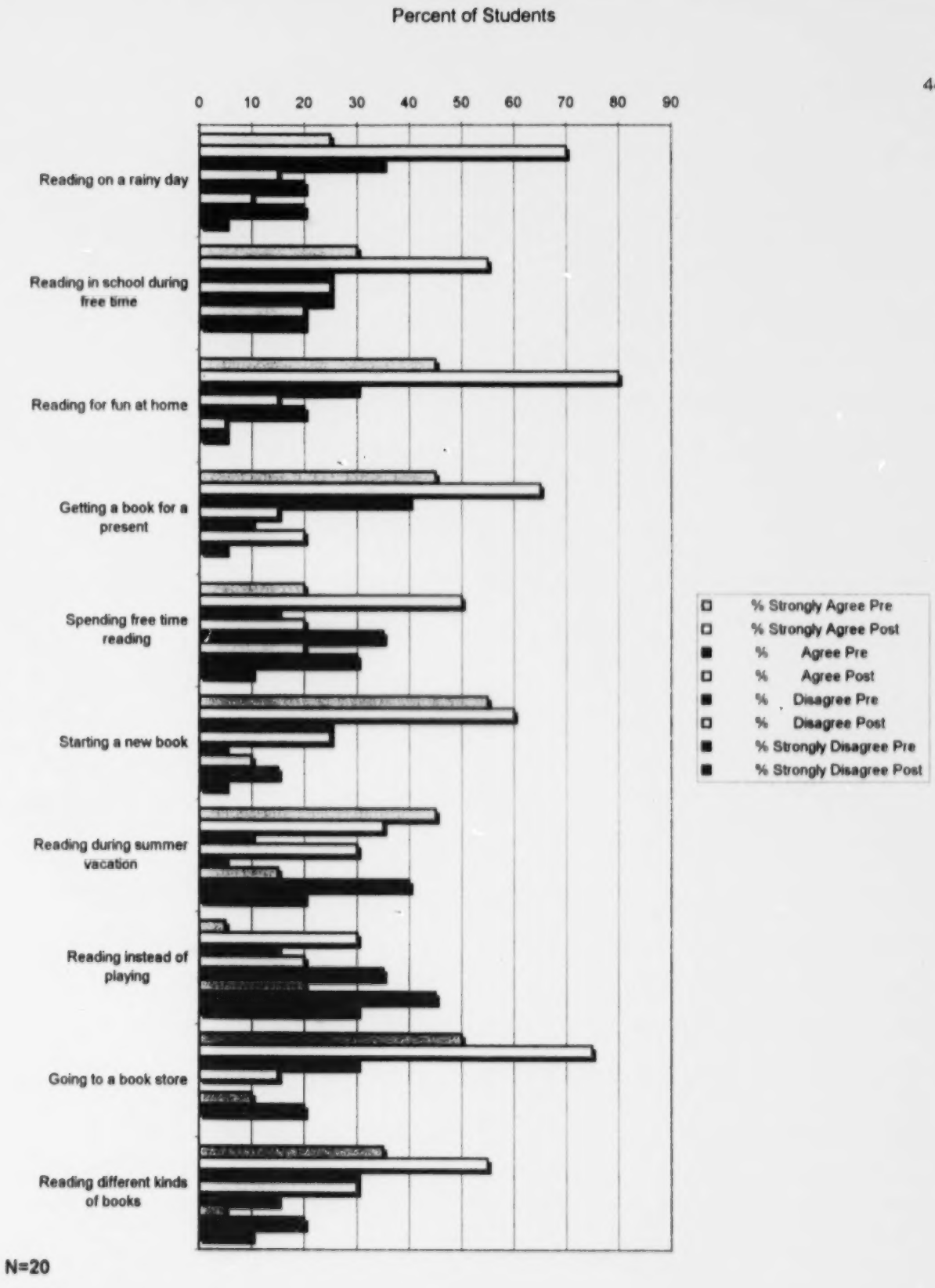


Figure 9. 2nd grade reading attitude pre and post survey results.

A summary of the Reading Attitude Survey (Appendix A) administered to third grade is presented in Table 10.

Table 10

3rd Grade Reading Attitude Survey Results

	% Strongly Agree		% Agree		% Disagree		% Strongly Disagree	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
A. Reading on a rainy day	60	50	30	40	0	10	10	0
B. Reading in school during free time	85	55	10	40	0	5	5	0
C. Reading for fun at home	70	60	15	30	15	5	0	5
D. Getting a book for a present	90	65	5	25	0	10	5	0
E. Spending free time reading	35	45	40	45	25	5	0	5
F. Starting a new book	80	80	15	20	5	0	0	0
G. Reading during summer vacation	40	45	40	45	5	5	15	5
H. Reading instead of playing	25	25	30	45	25	15	20	15
I. Going to a book store	80	75	20	25	0	0	0	0
J. Reading different kinds of books	75	80	20	15	0	5	5	0

N=20

One particular area noted on the third grade reading attitude survey results is an increase of 15 percent of the children choosing reading instead of playing. The choice of spending their free time reading also showed a 15 percent upward trend. Even the choice of reading during summer vacation increased by 10 percent. No other notable changes were found. These data are illustrated in Figure 10.

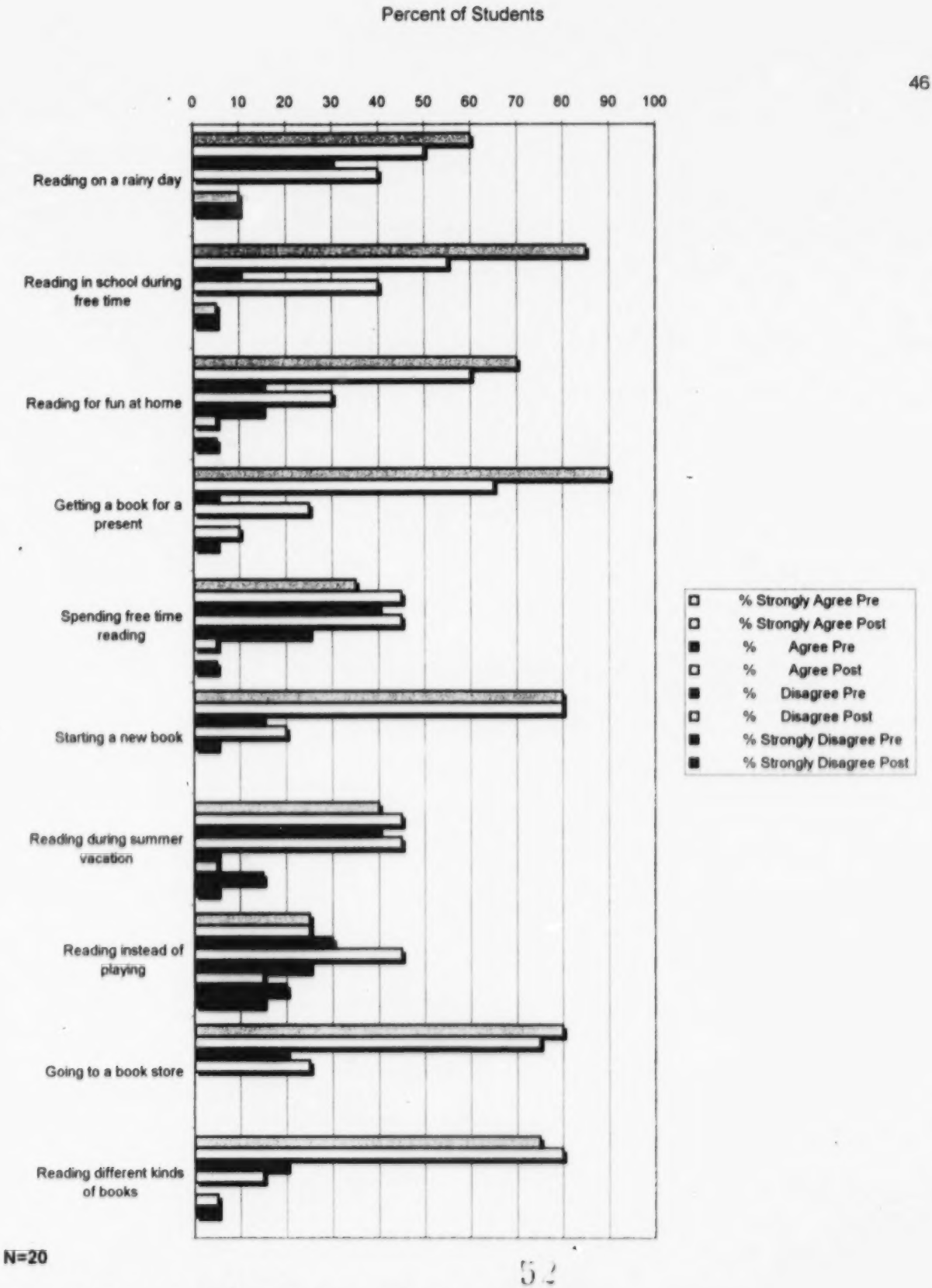


Figure 10. 3rd grade reading attitude pre and post survey results.

A summary of the Reading Attitude Survey (Appendix A) administered to sixth grade Class A is presented in Table 11.

Table 11

6th Grade Class A Reading Attitude Survey Results

	% Strongly Agree		% Agree		% Disagree		% Strongly Disagree	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
A. Reading on a rainy day	37	28	53	56	5	11	5	6
B. Reading in school during free time	53	39	37	50	5	11	5	0
C. Reading for fun at home	32	39	53	33	11	11	5	17
D. Getting a book for a present	42	28	37	44	21	22	0	6
E. Spending free time reading	47	28	37	44	11	28	5	0
F. Starting a new book	84	44	5	44	5	6	5	6
G. Reading during summer vacation	26	17	53	44	16	17	5	22
H. Reading instead of playing	5	0	42	39	32	22	21	39
I. Going to a book store	58	28	32	50	11	22	0	0
J. Reading different kinds of books	63	33	32	56	0	6	5	6

Pre N=19
Post N=18

In general the reading attitude survey for 6A showed positive attitudes towards reading from the beginning of the intervention, and they remained that way through the conclusion. However, there seemed to be a shift downward from strongly agree to agree. These data are illustrated in Figure 11.

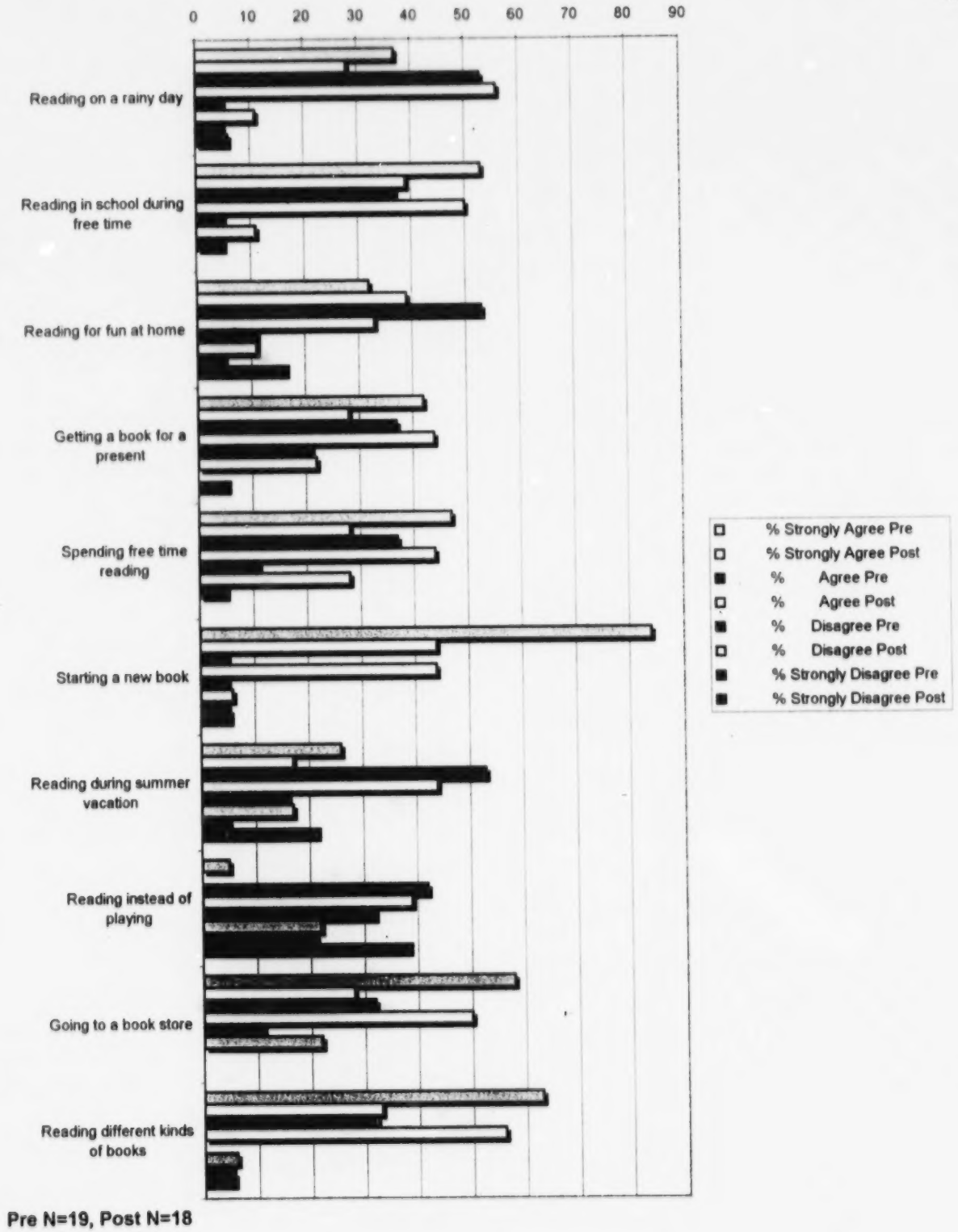


Figure 11. 6th grade, class A, reading attitude pre and post survey results.

A summary of the Reading Attitude Survey (Appendix A) administered to sixth grade Class B is presented in Table 12.

Table 12

6th Grade Class B Reading Attitude Survey Results

	% Strongly Agree		% Agree		% Disagree		% Strongly Disagree	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
A. Reading on a rainy day	0	7	44	21	13	36	44	36
B. Reading in school during free time	13	7	29	36	38	29	19	29
C. Reading for fun at home	0	14	50	14	29	7	19	64
D. Getting a book for a present	13	14	44	29	29	21	13	36
E. Spending free time reading	0	7	44	14	25	36	31	43
F. Starting a new book	25	36	44	14	13	29	19	21
G. Reading during summer vacation	6	7	6	0	19	21	69	63
H. Reading instead of playing	0	0	6	0	6	7	88	93
I. Going to a book store	38	29	38	36	13	29	13	7
J. Reading different kinds of books	13	21	44	57	38	21	6	0

Pre N=15
Post N-14

The attitude in 6B was generally less positive than 6A. Some attitude growth was noted in the strongly agree response, but overall the profile appears to be more negative toward reading in the post intervention survey. These data are illustrated in Figure 12.

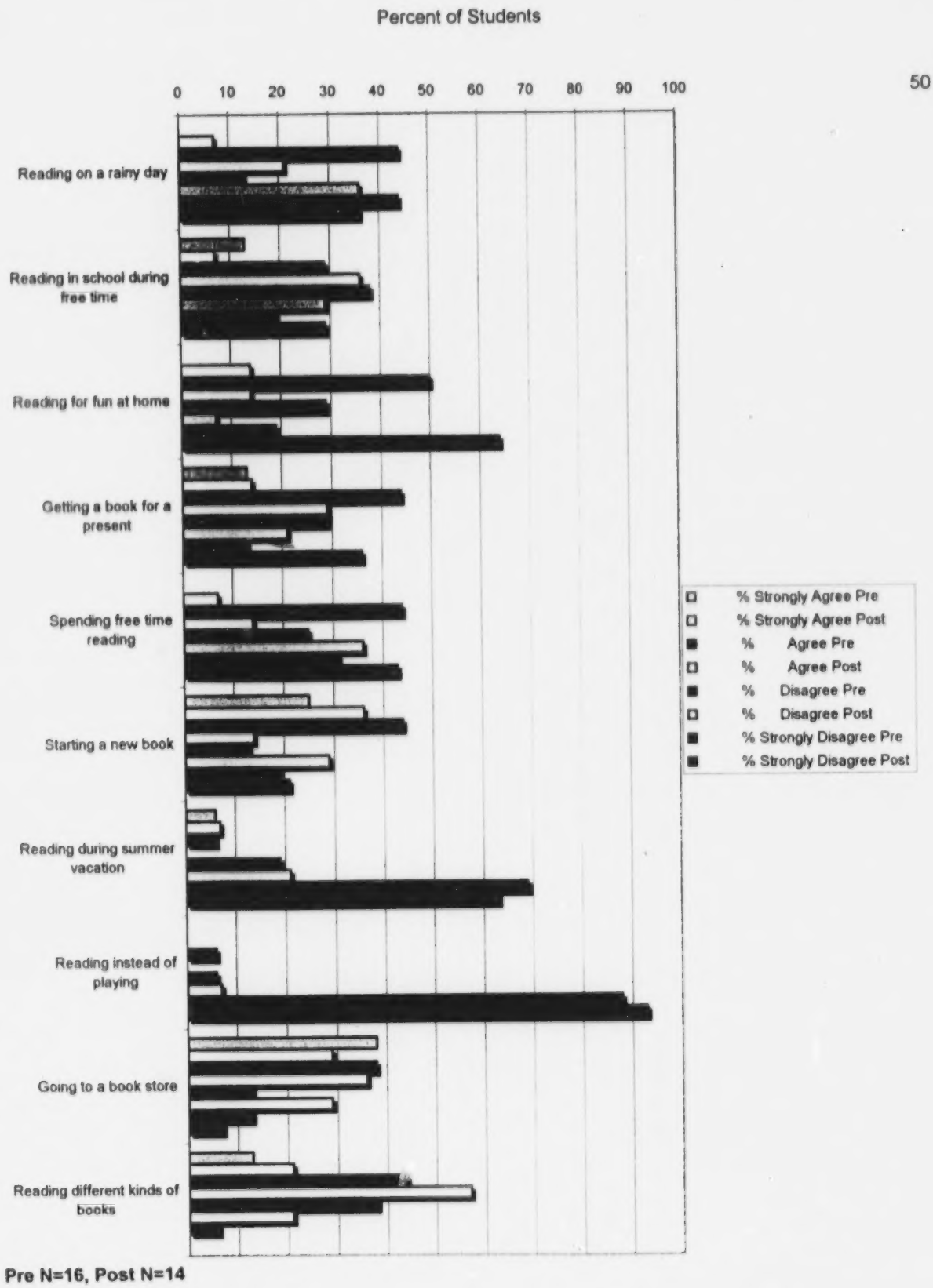


Figure 12. 6th grade, class B, reading attitude pre and post survey results.

Analysis of Literature Awareness Survey

A summary of the Literature Awareness Survey (Appendix B) administered to second grade is presented in Table 13.

Table 13

2nd Grade Literature Awareness Surveys

Test Items	% of Correct Responses	
Student Identifies:	Pre	Post
1. Title of fiction book	10	80
2. Poetry book	20	95
3. Poet	50	100
4. Author of fiction	15	20
5. Realistic fiction	35	55
6. Biography	90	100
7. Author of poetry	20	100
8. Title of mystery	75	95
9. Title of fairy tale	95	95
10. Title of information science	65	85

N=20

The second grade results of the post survey on literature awareness indicates strong growth in almost all areas. The ability to identify a well-known book of poetry increased from 20 percent to 95 percent. Identifying two famous children's poets increased from 50 percent to100 percent and from 20 percent to 100 percent. Identifying another well- known book increased from 10 percent to 80 percen:. There was only a slight increase in students' ability to identify a popular chapter book from 15 percent to 20 percent. These data are illustrated in Figure 13.

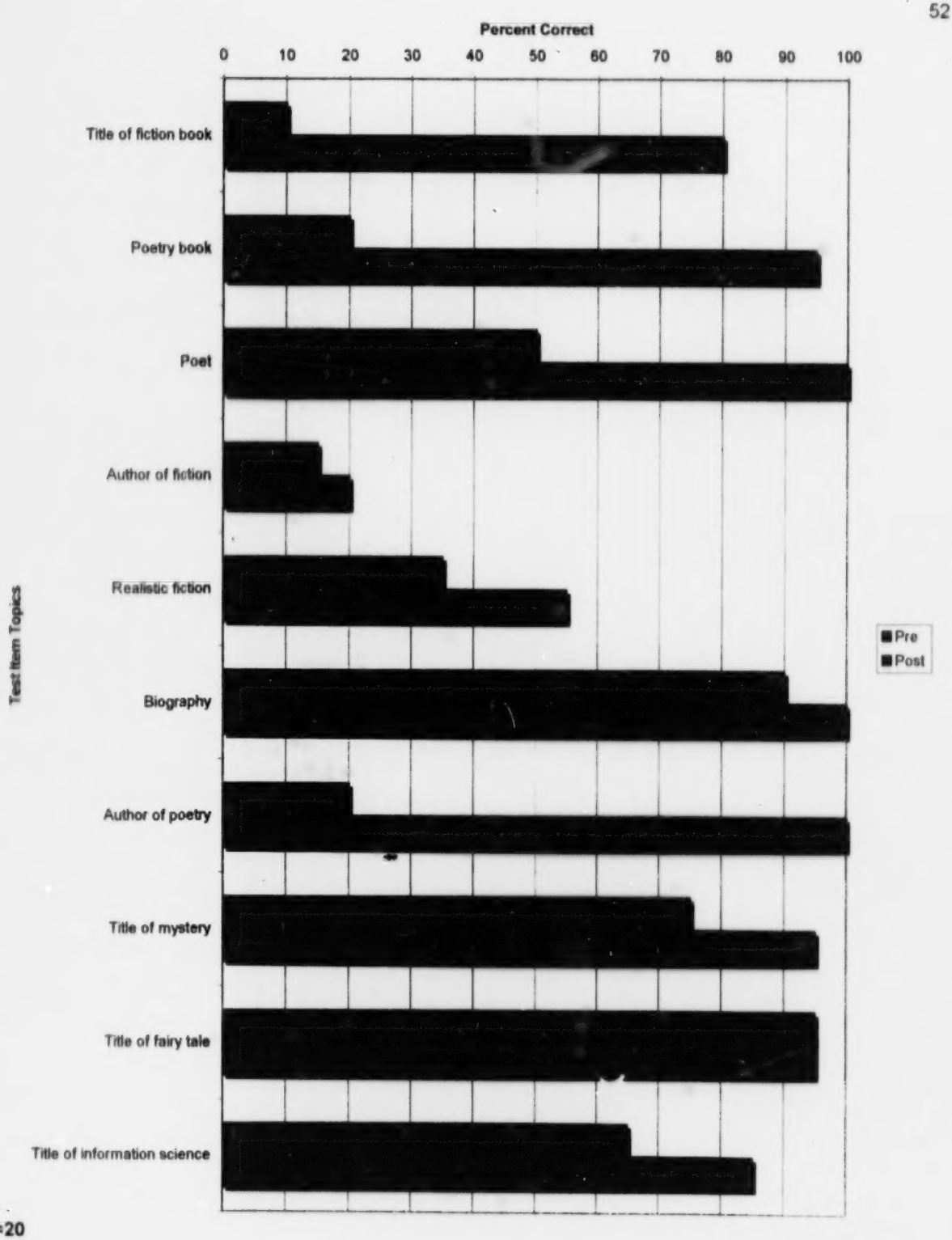


Figure 13. 2nd grade literature awareness pre and post survey results.

A summary of the Literature Awareness Survey (Appendix B) administered to third grade is presented in Table 14.

Table 14

3rd Grade Literature Awareness Surveys

Test Items	% of Correct Responses	
Student Identifies:	Pre	Post
1. Title of fiction book	15	50
2. Poetry book	25	75
3. Poet	40	100
4. Author of fiction	25	50
5. Realistic fiction	70	45
6. Biography	80	95
7. Author of poetry	60	90
8. Title of mystery	80	95
9. Title of fairy tale	95	100
10. Title of information science	60	75

N=20

Results of the third grade literature awareness survey showed a significant increase in the knowledge of literature and their authors. Only one area, realistic fiction, showed a decrease of 25 percent recognition. The data shows high recognition of poetry, fiction and the author of fiction. It could be inferred that previous exposure and popularity of specific authors might be a factor. These data are illustrated in Figure 14.

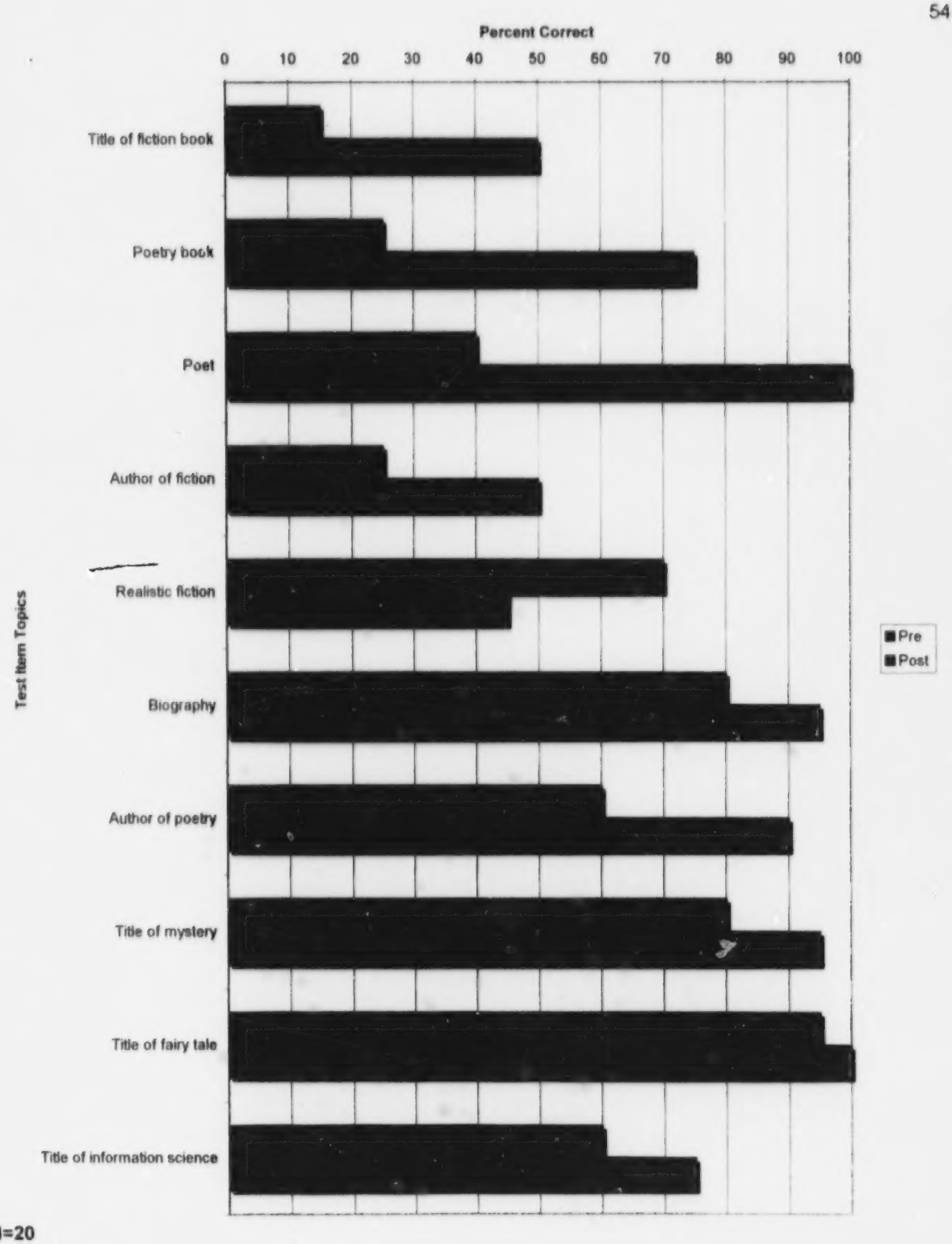


Figure 14. 3rd grade literature awareness pre and post survey results.

A summary of the Literature Awareness Survey (Appendix C) administered to sixth grade Class A and Class B is presented in Tables 15 and 16.

Table 15

6th Grade Class A Literature Awareness Surveys

	% of Correct Responses	
Test Item Topic	Pre	Post
Poetry	95	94
Poet	100	94
Title	74	72
Title	74	100
Title	32	83
Realistic Fiction	74	94
Mystery	95	89
Fantasy	100	94
Author: Gary Paulson	100	100
Avi	16	50
Jean Fritz	89	89
Chris Van Allsburg	37	39
Lois Lowry	89	100
Virginia Hamilton	63	61
Matt Christopher	79	94
Ann M. Martin	84	89
Bill Wallace	63	72
Jack Prelutsky	79	72
Jon Scieszka	53	39
Laurence Yep	58	28

Pre N=19
Post N=18

Table 16

6th Grade Class B Literature Awareness Surveys

Test Item Topic	% of Correct Responses Pre	Post
Poetry	40	64
Poet	60	43
Title	33	21
Title	7	43
Title	13	79
Realistic Fiction	53	36
Mystery	87	79
Fantasy	73	71
Author: Gary Paulson	80	100
Avi	20	14
Jean Fritz	73	64
Chris Van Allsburg	47	43
Lois Lowry	67	50
Virginia Hamilton	40	50
Matt Christopher	80	93
Ann M. Martin	67	64
Bill Wallace	73	86
Jack Prelutsky	80	57
Jon Scieszka	60	43
Laurence Yep	53	79

Pre N=15
Post N=14

The accuracy levels in the literary survey showed mixed and indefinite trends. In Class 6A the class average went from 73% correct responses to 78% correct. Of the twelve specific authors surveyed, the class equaled or gained with eight of the authors. Class 6B also gained overall 5% in total correct answers going from 55% correct to 60% correct. However, in an item by item analysis some items were up or down dramatically in Class 6B but were somewhat more stable in 6A. These data are illustrated in Figures 15 and 16.

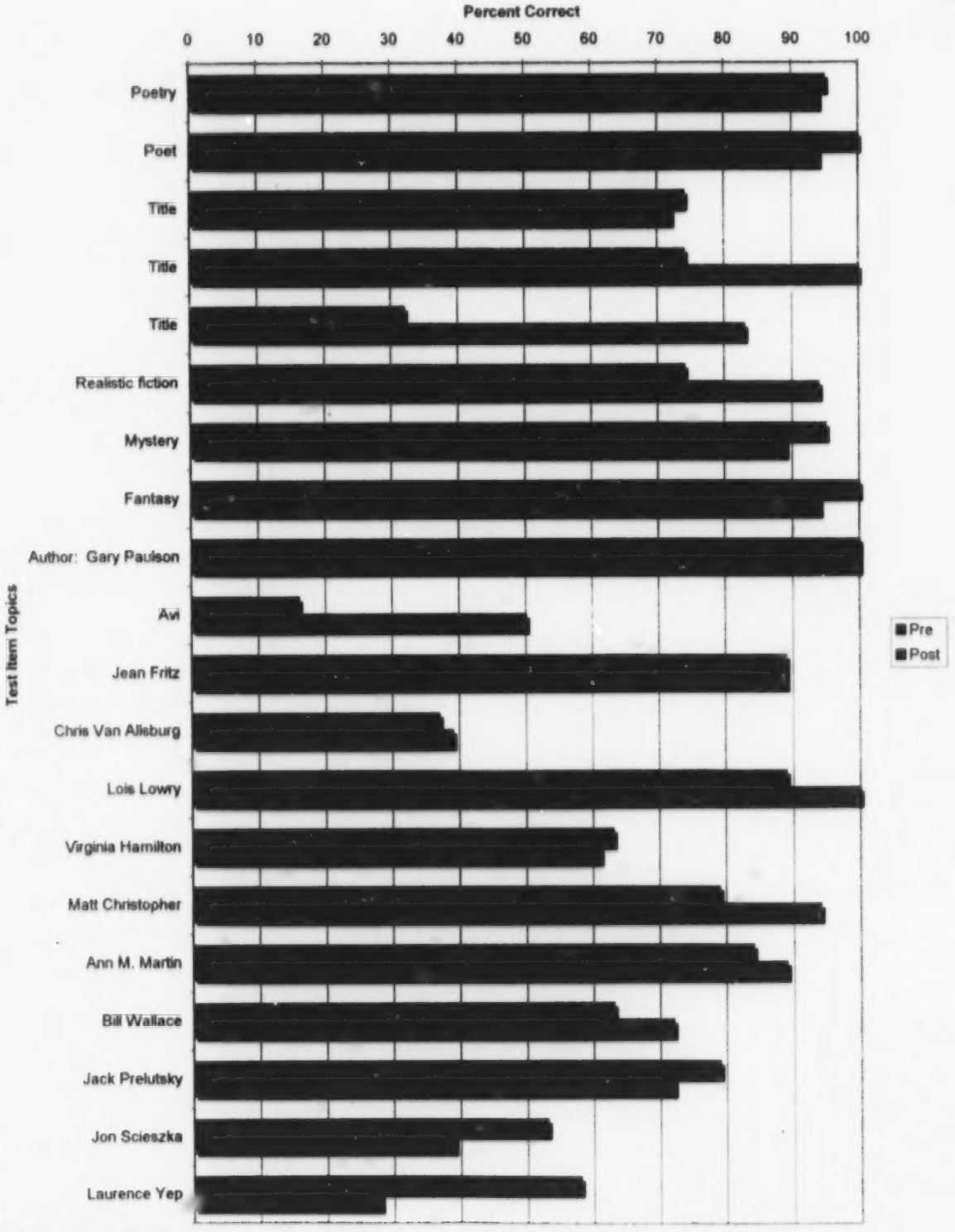
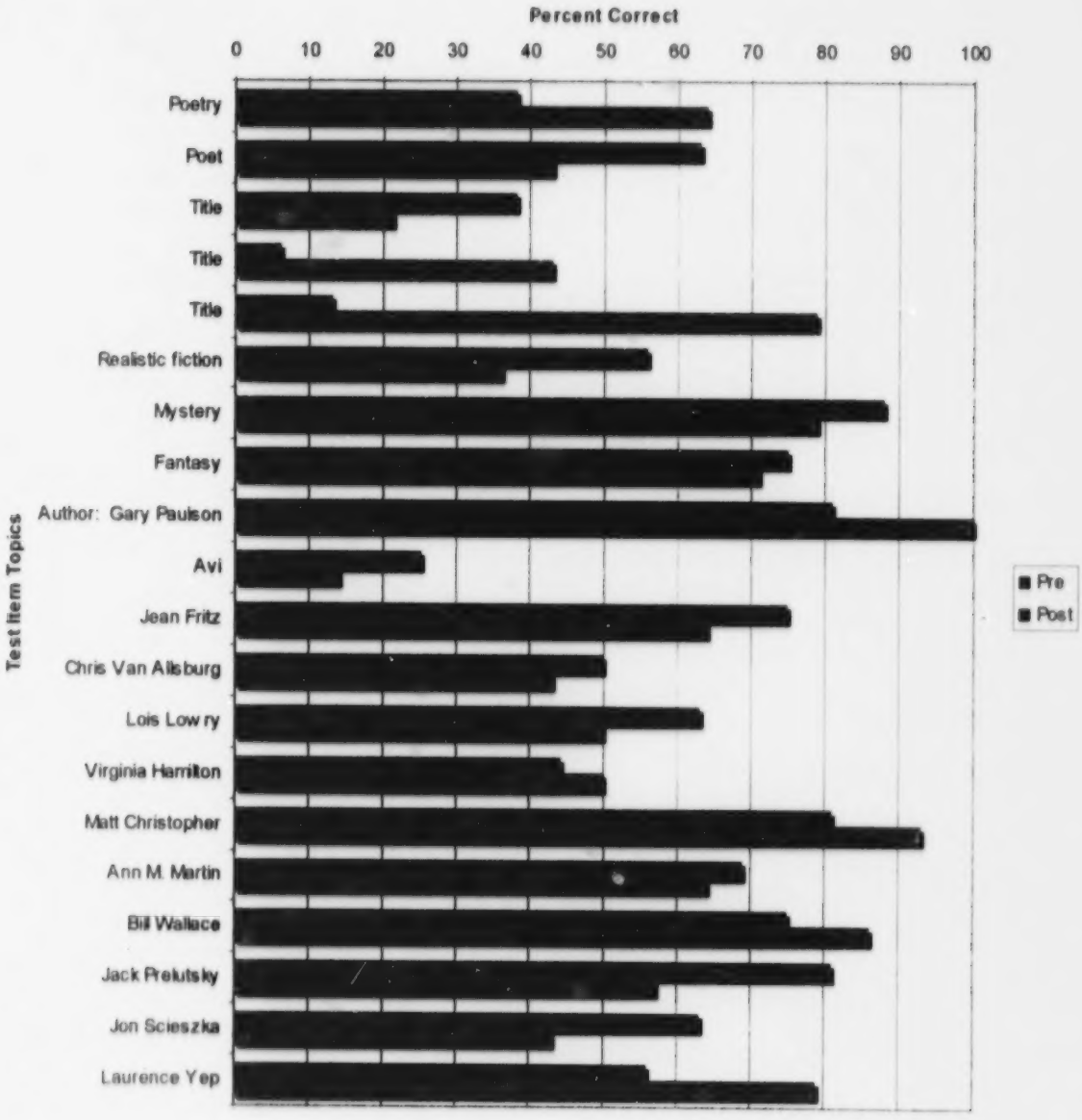


Figure 15. 6th grade, class A, literature awareness pre and post survey results.



N= 20

Figure 16. 6th grade, class B, literature awareness pre and post survey results.

Analysis of Teacher Journal Entries

Teacher journals indicate that second grade students were initially somewhat reluctant to settle into the quiet reading time. Notes indicate that students were having difficulty selecting books which were of an appropriate level. Some children selected books that were too difficult and "pretended" to read, while others selected books that were too short to occupy them for the entire reading time. Many often failed to have a book selected for the next day. During the third week a running record of selected books was initiated (Appendix M). The resultant student accountability notably reduced these problems. By the end of the first month, students had learned to better judge the appropriateness of their selections, and were seldom without adequate reading material. All students were reading!

Regarding response time, students were initially reluctant to report to the class. To encourage participation, an inexpensive microphone was employed with which the students were interviewed by the teacher. This became the preferred mode of reporting. Four students reported each day, allowing all twenty to report once per week. Students greatly looked forward to their time in the limelight. It was rewarding to watch as students started asking questions and requesting to read books as recommended by classmates.

Modeling responses using various intelligences did encourage students to attempt alternative response methods. A great favorite was the group mural. This was particularly popular for reporting on non-fiction books that were displayed to complement the science or social studies units. Other responses of note included a graph of shark lengths, a diorama of the solar system, a skit of Bony Legs, and a dramatization of The Little Mermaid using toy figures.

After the winter break, the response time had to be eliminated to make way for cursive writing instruction. The students' excitement over beginning cursive seemed to assuage their disappointment over loss of response time. The enthusiasm for reading has continued despite the change. Once, when asked to put their books away, the class began chanting, " We want to read! We want to read!" It was truly touching.

Incentive programs included the Pizza Hut Book-It program from October through February and the Accelerated Reader program begun in November. Initially, most students participated in the Pizza Hut program, but after the third month when students learned that the class would not be able to earn the pizza party due to non-participation by a few students, the participation rate dropped dramatically. The Accelerated Reader program was embraced by a few students. Though most students have read one or two books as part of the program, only five students have continued to work toward achieving points through this program.

Teacher journals reported third grade students seeking a variety of reading materials as well as looking forward to sustained silent reading time. Following this quiet reading with teacher modeling, responses proved to be centered around three intelligences, an improvement from just verbal/linguistic. Some examples include choosing a chapter in the story, writing a skit, and performing for the class, displaying toy farm machinery and demonstrating its use according to the book they read, and sharing a visual representing the beginning, middle, and ending of a story.

On the other hand, the results of the incentive program administered did not seem to be a factor in time spent in leisure time reading. This could be due to the unpopularity of the incentive offered for the age of the child.

Despite the surveys' less than positive outcomes at the sixth grade level, teacher observation indicates positive growth during the intervention and continued interest in reading that was not there previously for many students. No student has been noticed

reading less, and many are now reading regularly on their own initiative. The book responses were highly successful in many cases and brought a great sense of pride in accomplishment to the students. A wide range of multiple intelligences responses was used with no students being permitted to just tell about the story. The book responses were prepared on time in the last assignment and with no one failing to be prepared. Several students are already making choices for the month ahead. Students continue to appear to enjoy opportunities for sustained silent reading in the classroom. Incentives seem to be a motivating factor for many of the students.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the presentation and analysis of the data on students' attitudes toward leisure time reading, it can be concluded that students' attitudes improved at all targeted grade levels, though this increase was more dramatic in the lower grades than at the sixth grade level. It was also evident that exposure to large quantities of literature of various genres resulted in an increase in students' literature awareness at all levels though most markedly at the second grade level. Since second graders have had less previous exposure, it is not surprising that the most gains were achieved at this level.

It was observed by all three researchers that the amount of time and energy devoted to persuading students to read for pleasure was greatly reduced as a result of the intervention. It was also noted that students greatly looked forward to sustained silent reading time and would express genuine disappointment if a schedule change resulted in a loss of such time. The students were even more vocal in their desire to have the teacher read aloud to the class. As one student put it, "You don't read anything like my mom. You make it so exciting."

Additionally, the implementation of multiple intelligence response activities provided opportunities for a rich variety of group interaction. The broad range of responses by students at all levels and abilities delighted the researchers. It was

especially pleasing to see the influence that these presentations had on the reading choices of the peer audience. Occasionally, certain books even had to be put on a waiting list to provide fair access to eager students. Overall, teacher observation most definitely indicates increased positive attitudes toward leisure time reading at all levels and abilities.

Based on the findings of this project, the researchers have several recommendations. Regarding the data on reading attitude, the researchers felt the available instrument did not necessarily meet the needs of the project. Certainly, attitudes are difficult to measure and so many factors can influence attitudes such as time of year, weather, or mood of the day. The addition and omission of certain questions could prove useful in obtaining more specific data. It might be desirable to create an attitude survey containing questions more suitable to the needs of the targeted population and interests of the researchers. However, this must be weighed against the benefits of using a well-known survey for which much data has been gathered. Other researchers should be mindful of the fact that the return rate of survey responses is generally low.

At the second grade level, the researcher found it difficult to model silent reading during the sustained silent reading period. Due to the nature of the class, it was necessary to circulate around the room to maintain a semblance of quiet. This was partially due to the subvocalization of emergent readers but was more a result of the highly impulsive nature of a number of the students. It was not that students were not reading, but rather that they were so eager to talk about what they were reading or were in need of some support and encouragement. Though unable to model during sustained silent reading time, this researcher feels that modeling a love for reading was accomplished through an enthusiastic oral presentation of literature on a daily basis.

The implementation of a running record of student selections (Appendix M) was extremely helpful though somewhat time consuming. Not only did it provide information about student preferences and general progress, but it helped to keep track of the teacher's large collection of books. Each day, two or three students would invariably need to refer to the record to remember what they had selected. Also, as their assigned response time neared, students often asked to refer to the list to recall what they had read in the past week so as to decide which book to share with the class. It is suggested that in order to expedite the recording process, once selections are made, students should keep the books on their desks, and as the class completes other work, the teacher or aide should go around to students recording their selections.

One of the most important factors in the success of this intervention is the availability of a large selection of quality literature. Having a flexible librarian is very helpful. Each day the second graders had access to the library during their computer lab time. Also, midway through the intervention, most of the fiction books from the teacher's collection were pulled from the shelf and replaced by books of poetry and stories of rhyme from the library. This proved very motivating to the students. After a month, the teacher's collection was again displayed, which resulted in renewed interest by the students. It was also found that the displaying of non-fiction books that corresponded to units of study also proved highly motivating. Students especially liked using these books for their group response activities.

In order to best utilize time, this researcher found it helpful to have students read a teacher selected book to a volunteer reader on a rotating basis during the sustained silent reading time. This was accomplished through the use of a Foster Grandparent who would listen to students read in the hallway just outside the classroom. Also, at this time three students per day were assigned to listen to recorded stories from the basal text. Generally, the length of the taped story determined the length of the overall

reading period. Lastly, students who read more slowly were given the option of using the silent reading time to finish reading assigned selections that the more able readers had already finished. This seemed to allay some of the anxiety that might otherwise have resulted.

Finally, regarding response activities, the use of an interviewing technique proved quite successful to begin the process. Even the shyest students were eager to have their time with the microphone. After the presentation of various responses by the teacher, a few students attempted some of the techniques such as skits, but by far the favorite activity was the group mural. However, this proved somewhat difficult to manage in that the students all had to have read the same book and then had to find the time to coordinate their efforts. This was accomplished by letting them work together during computer lab time. The advantage of using the group mural was that it proved to be a successful transition into writing reports. Unlike sixth graders who need to be encouraged to try other activities besides written reports, second graders need guidance toward writing reports. Once murals were created, students were encouraged to write a sentence about each picture they contributed to the project. The sentences were then written on a word processor, printed out, and pasted in order under the mural. The students felt more successful as writers when they had this group support.

At the third grade level, the recording of books being read proved to be a factor that provided the researcher with useful documentation of student reading selections. This was helpful as it prepared the student to be ready for sustained silent reading time, thus instilling a sense of responsibility. Unfortunately, the time needed to keep up with this task was overwhelming. Towards the completion of the intervention, adult aides and volunteer parents were trained to assist with this record keeping. A recommendation at the third grade level would be to train helpers initially to take over

recording the literature titles and guiding students in their reading choices. This would free the teacher for instructional activities.

The teacher could then be free to concentrate on planning the multiple intelligence responses to be modeled for the students. This researcher discovered that modeling age appropriate responses requires much thought and planning. For example, when a biography is modeled by dressing up as the character, the students are encouraged to interview the character and summarize the facts of that person's life. The researcher found the children able to recall the character more easily, and interest in reading the book was more apparent. A collection of successful, teacher-modeled responses would prove to be a valuable resource for future classes.

At the sixth grade level the intervention seemed to work in terms of making a free reading book a part of the students' responsibility to have with them daily. It was easily apparent through observation that this good habit was developed and continued by most students. Although at the beginning of the intervention the teacher provided a wide variety of appealing reading material for students to borrow during reading time, it is suggested that a dependency for the teacher to always provide the material not be allowed to happen. This was a great concern in regard to the low achieving class. This dependency seemed to foster a browsing type of reader rather than one who was truly engrossed in reading. It is important that the students can take the books with them to continue to read at times other than at sustained silent reading.

A very successful part of the intervention was expecting the students to respond or report on their books in some fashion other than writing or giving a summary of the book. Both in the below grade level class and the advanced level class students were capable of quality responses using a variety of multiple intelligences. A key to success in this area is modeling of responses on the part of the teacher and parent awareness and partnership involvement leading to student completion. Benefits of the successful

responses were increased self-esteem, positive peer and school recognition, development of new skills, and promotion of authors and favorite stories to a peer audience.

Finally, it is suggested that in a departmentalized setting, such as this study involved at the sixth grade level, the teacher carefully consider the curricular goals for the subject area and determine how much time can reasonably be devoted to independent reading. There are usually so many reading skills that are to be developed that it becomes practical and efficient to use a basal reader or a shared novel for reading material. Therefore, it is suggested at this level that this type of program not make up the whole reading experience but just be implemented during a portion of the year.

In summation, the researchers found a sense of personal satisfaction with the observable results of the intervention. Although the data did not overwhelmingly support a strong increase in attitude toward leisure time reading in some cases, the opinion of the researchers is that the outcome of the intervention did result in increased knowledge and reading and responding skills which will hopefully lead to more competent and successful readers in the future. With new confidence and success, the attitude toward leisure time reading should continue to develop in a positive direction.

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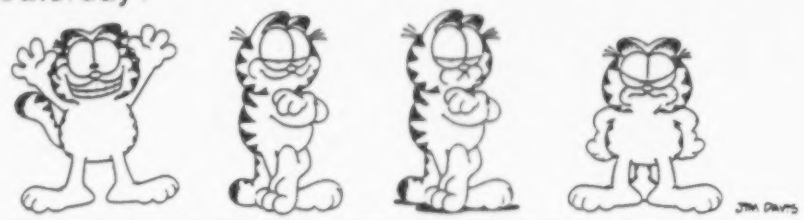
Appendixes

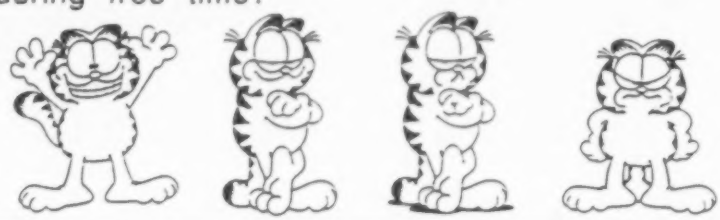
ELEMENTARY READING ATTITUDE SURVEY

School_____ Grade___ Name_____

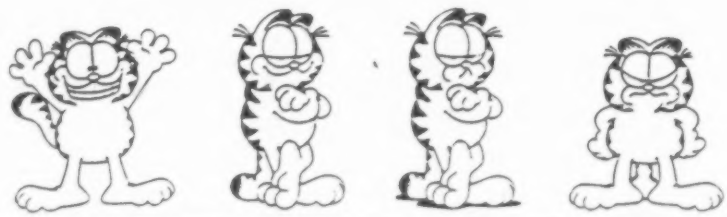
1. How do you feel when you read a book on a rainy Saturday?



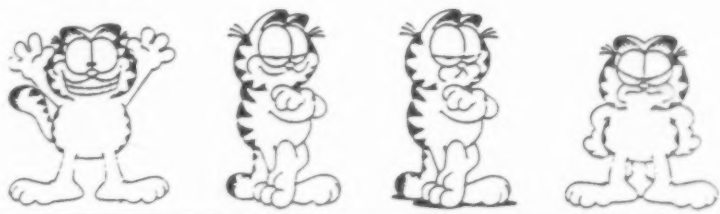
2. How do you feel when you read a book in school during free time?



3. How do you feel about reading for fun at home?

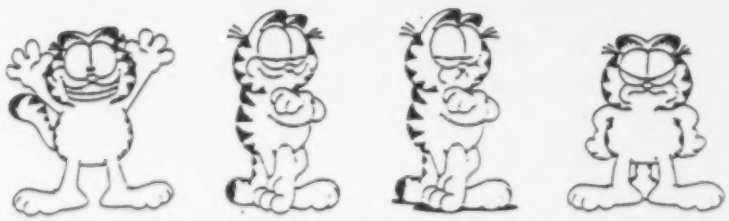


4. How do you feel about getting a book for a present?

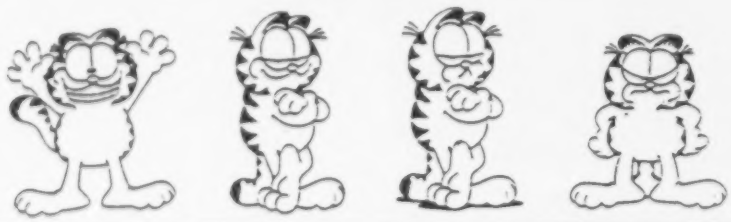


Appendix A (Continued)

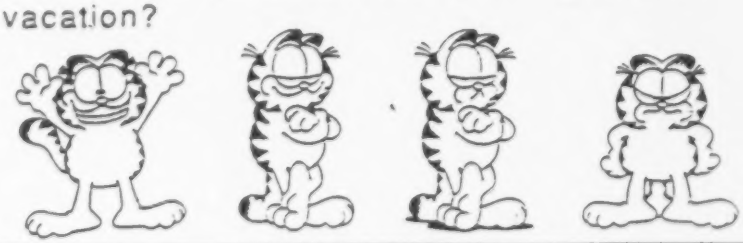
5. How do you feel about spending free time reading?



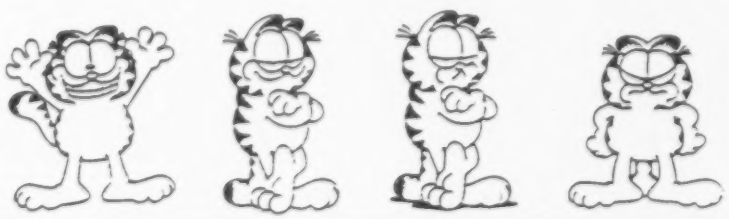
6. How do you feel about starting a new book?



7. How do you feel about reading during summer vacation?

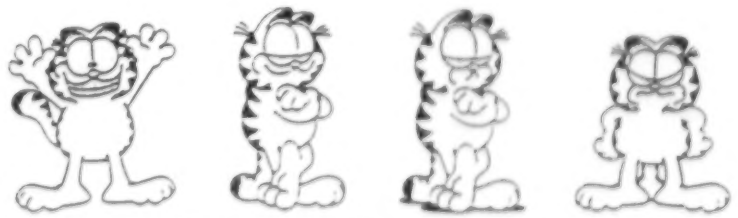


8. How do you feel about reading instead of playing?

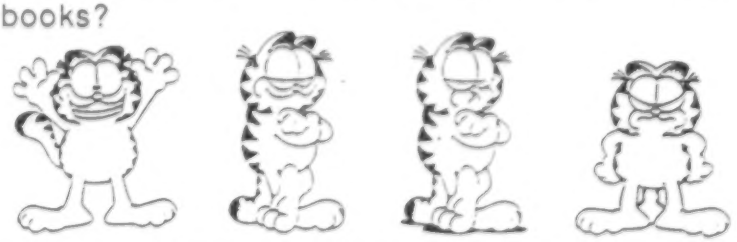


Appendix A (Continued)

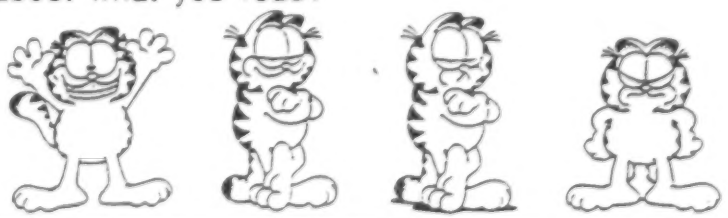
9. How do you feel about going to a bookstore?



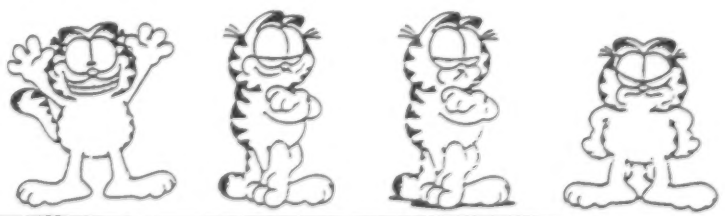
10. How do you feel about reading different kinds of books?



11. How do you feel when the teacher asks you questions about what you read?

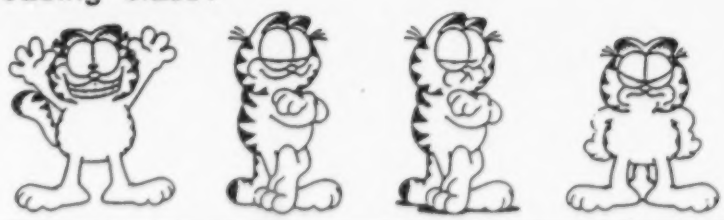


12. How do you feel about doing reading workbook pages and worksheets?

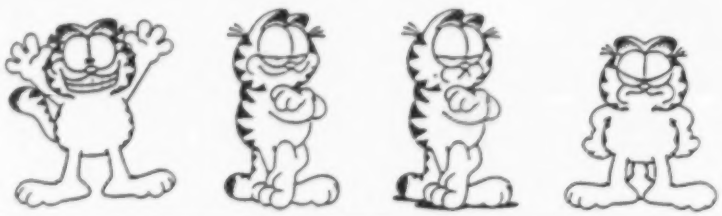


Appendix A (Continued)

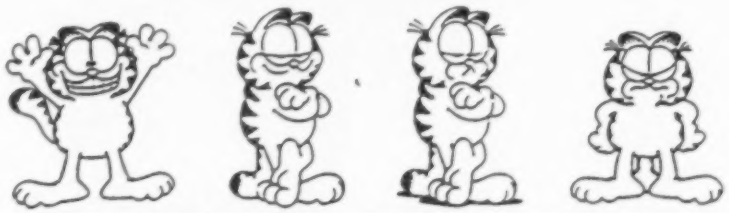
17. How do you feel about the stories you read in reading class?



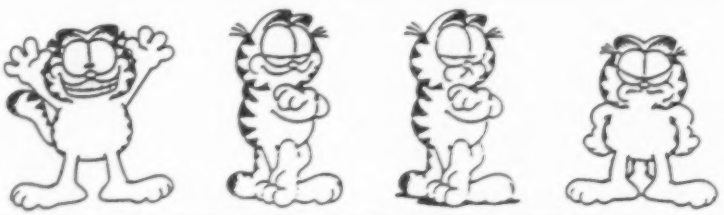
18. How do you feel when you read out loud in class?



19. How do you feel about using a dictionary?



20. How do you feel about taking a reading test?



Elementary Reading Attitude Survey
Scoring sheet

Student name _____

Teacher _____

Grade _____ Administration date _____

Scoring guide	
4 points	Happiest Garfield
3 points	Slightly smiling Garfield
2 points	Mildly upset Garfield
1 point	Very upset Garfield

Recreational reading		Academic reading	
1.	____	11.	____
2.	____	12.	____
3.	____	13.	____
4.	____	14.	____
5.	____	15.	____
6.	____	16.	____
7.	____	17.	____
8.	____	18.	____
9.	____	19.	____
10.	____	20.	____
Raw score:	____	Raw score:	____

Full scale raw score (Recreational + Academic): _____

Percentile ranks		
	Recreational	
	Academic	
	Full scale	

McKenna & Kear (1990)

Appendix B
Second and Third Grade Literature Awareness Survey

Directions: Draw a line under the correct answer.

1. Which is the correct title?

Lots of Freckles	Freckle Juice
Dots	Red Spots All Over

2. Which one of these is a book of poetry?

New Kid On The Block	The Bravest Dog Ever
Chocolate Fever	Dream Doctor

3. Which writer is a poet?

John Langstaff	Judith Viorst
Bernard Waber	Jack Prelutsky

4. Who is the author of Charlie and the Chocolate Factory?

William Sounder	Jean Fritz
Roald Dahl	Jamie Gilson

5. Which title is an example of realistic fiction?

Little House on the Prairie	The Very Busy Spider
Millions of Cats	Fables

6. Which of these is a biography?

The Rose in My Garden	Rain
Martin Luther King Jr.	Ira Sleeps Over

7. Who is the author of Where the Sidewalk Ends?

Shel Silverstein	Bill Peet
Jim Trelease	Rebecca Caudill

8. Which title is an example of a mystery?

Sounder	Tuck Everlasting
Goosebumps	Molly's Pilgrim

Appendix B (Continued)

9. Which title is an example of a fairy tale?

Annie and the Old One	Soccer Halfback
Chocolate Touch	Cinderella

10. Which of these is a book about science?

Magic Schoolbus	Midnight Express
Encyclopedia Brown	Sarah, Plain and Tall

Appendix C
Literature Survey

Circle the letter of your choice in Questions 1 through 8.

1. Which one of the following titles is a book of poetry?

   a. Hatchet
   b. The Light in the Attic
   c. The Indian in the Cupboard
   d. Redwall

2. Which writer is best known as a poet?

   a. Bill Wallace
   b. Katherine Paterson
   c. Shel Silverstein
   d. John Fitzgerald

3. Choose the title that is a correct title.

   a. A Taste of Blackberries
   b. Where the Sidewalk Starts
   c. Mr. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH
   d. The Summer of the Ducks

4. Choose the title that is a correct title.

   a. Maniac Marshall
   b. Sounder
   c. Island of the Red Whales
   d. Anne of the Green Roofs

5. Choose the title that is a correct title.

   a. Zlateh the Crow and Other Stories
   b. The Ghost Tollbooth
   c. Beauty
   d. Phoebe and the Captain

6. Which title is an example of realistic fiction?

   a. Shiloh
   b. The Pyramids of Egypt
   c. The Iceman
   d. Into the Mummy's Tomb

(Over)

Appendix C (Continued)

7. Which title is an example of mystery?

   a. The Way Things Work
   b. Someone Was Watching
   c. The Great Brain
   d. The Best Christmas Pageant Ever

8. Which title is an example of fantasy?

   a. Backyard Dragon
   b. Letters from Rifka
   c. Call It Courage
   d. What's the Big Idea, Ben Franklin?

9. Circle each name below that is a children's writer. Circle twelve names.

Gary Paulson	Danielle Steele	Ann M. Martin
Avi	Stephen Covey	John Grisham
Jean Fritz	Lois Lowry	Bill Wallace
Chris Van Allsburg	Mary Higgins Clark	Jack Prelutsky
William Manchester	Virginia Hamilton	Jon Scieszka
Lynda Bird Robb	Matt Christopher	Al Gore
Tom Clancy	Henry David Thoreau	Laurence Yep

Appendix D
Parent Survey

1. On an average, how many minutes daily does your child observe adults engaged in leisure time reading?

0-10 min._____ 15-30 min._____ over 30 min._____

2. On an average. how many minutes daily does your child choose to engage in leisure time reading?

none_____ 5-10_____ 15-30_____

30-60_____ over 60_____

3. Check which types of reading materials you have available in your home?

magazines_____ children's magazines_____

newspapers_____ encyclopedia_____

books_____ children's books_____

electronic media (ex: internet) _____

4. On average how many minutes does someone read to you child daily? (ex: parent, babysitter, older sibling)

0-10 min. _____ 15-30 min. _____ over 30 min._____

5. What types of reading material does your child enjoy? (Check all that apply)

mystery_____ animal stories_____
fantasy_____ biographies_____

humorous_____ poetry_____

science_____ chapter books_____

science fiction_____ magazines_____

easy reader/picture books_____ sports_____

encyclopedias_____ historical fiction_____

electronic media_____ other_____

Appendix D (Continued)

6. Does your household have a library card?_____

   If yes, how often do you frequent the library?_____

7. What types of obligations prevent you from engaging in leisure time reading? (Check all that apply)

   job_____

   child care_____

   continuing education_____

   home chores_____

   community involvement_____

   other_____

8. What types of activities does your child participate in?

   sports_____

   television_____

   dance, gymnastics, music_____

   video/computer games_____

   play (free time)_____

9. How much time does your child spend watching television/video games daily?

   0-30 min._____ 30-60 min._____

   1 hour-2 hours_____ more than 2 hours_____

Appendix E
Bibliography

Second Grade

Adler, David Picture Book of Harriet Tubman

Babcock, Chris No Moon, No Milk

Blume, Judy Freckle Juice

Breathed, Berkeley The Last Basselope

Bunting, Eve The Wall

Coles, Robert The Story of Ruby Bridges

Dakos, Kalli Raise Your Hand if You're Not Here-Poems About School

Davidson, Margaret Helen Keller

Deedy, Carmen Agra Library Dragon

Dolphin, Laurie Oasis of Peace

Dubowski, Cathy East Toy Story

Duffey, Betsy The Boy in the Doghouse

Ehrlich, Amy Parents in the Pigpen, Pigs in the Tub

Fritz, Jean Just a Few Words Mr. Lincoln

Geringer, Laura Myth Men-Hercules

Greenburg, Dan The Zack Files-Through the Medicine Cabinet

Greenburg, Dan The Zack Files-Zap! I'm a Mindreader

Hoestlandt, Jo Star of Fear, Star of Hope

Holland, Margaret Mother Terese

Impey, Rose Scare Yourself to Sleep

Jassem, Kate Sacajawea

Kessel, Joyce K. The Story of Squanto-The First Thanksgiving

Kudrna, Imbior Bathrub for Boa

Appendix E (Continued)

Lindbergh, Reeve The Day the Goose Got Loose

Lundell, Margo A Girl Named Helen Keller

Mallett, Jef Dangerous Dan

McDonald, Megan Is This a House for Hermit Crab?

McPhail, David Pigs a Plenty, Pigs Galore

O'Keefe, Susan Heyboer One Hungry Monster

Pallatini, Margie Piggie Pie

Parks, Barbara Junie B. Jones and My Big Fat Mouth

Parks, Barbara Junie B. Jones and the Stupid, Smelly Schoolbus

Polocco, Patricia Pink and Say

Porter, Connie Meet Addy-An American Girl

Prelutsky, Jack Pizza the Size of the Sun

Prelutsky, Jack The New Kid on the Block

Pringle, Laurence Octopus Hug

Santrey, Laurence Discovering the Stars

Schroeder, Alan Minty

Scieszka, Jon Frog Prince Cont.

Silverstein, Shel Falling Up

Standiford, Natalie The Bravest Dog Ever

Stevens, Janet Tops & Bottoms

Trapani, Iza Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star

Valley, Jim Rainbow Planet

Willis, Jeanne Earthlets as explained by Professor Xargle

Wolff, Patricia Ray Toll Bridge Troll

Appendix E (Continued)

Third Grade

Beduk, Shelley Our President: Bill Clinton

Brenner, Barbara The Magic Box

Brown, Marc Arthur's Birthday

Brown, Marc Arthur's Eyes

Brown, Marc Arthur's Family Vacation

Brown, Marc Arthur's Pet Business

Brown, Marc Arthur's Teacher Trouble

Cannon, Janell Stellaluna

Cleary, Beverly Muggie Maggie

Cosby, Bill The Best Way to Play

Duffy, Belsey How to Be Cool in the Third Grade

Duke, Kate Aunt Isabel Tells a Good One

Edwards, Nicholas Tiger Woods, An American Master

Houston, Gloria My Great Aunt Arizona

Levitin, Sonia Nine for California

Orgel, Doris Button Soup

Palatini, Margie Piggie Pie

Sixth Grade

De Felice, Cynthia Weasel

Wallace, Bill Beauty

Appendix F
Response Choices Using Multiple Intelligences

Verbal/ Linguistic	Tell a summary of the story	Create a different ending	Write a play to retell a part of the story
Musical/ Rhythmic	Write a poem to tell about the story or a character	Create a song/rap to tell about the story or a character	Play a recording of music and explain why it relates to plot
Logical/ Mathematical	Make a timeline of important events of the story and arrange in order	Create a different way to solve the problem in the story	Make up a board game using events from the story
Visual/ Spatial	Design a book cover to illustrate a favorite scene from the story	Make a puppet or dress a doll to portray a character	Make a series of pictures to illustrate the plot of the book
Bodily/ Kinesthetic	Dramatize a scene from the story	Create a dance to express the mood of the story	Teach the class new vocabulary from the story through charades
Interpersonal	Involve classmates to dramatize a scene from the story	Make a puzzle showing a scene from the story; work together to solve	Design a physical activity related to the story that others could do or play
Intrapersonal	Keep a journal of your thoughts/ideas on this story as you read it	Write about which character is most like yourself; explain	Record a diary entry to show a day in the life of a character
Environmental	Use recyclable materials to make a diorama of the story setting	Research the story's setting to learn more about the area; show the results you found	Make a chart to show the effect of weather on events in the story

****

These activities have been designed to give you many choices of ways to share your understanding of a story with an audience. Each time you respond to a book choose from a different row. With the teacher's approval the wording within a box can be changed to fit your needs. Please stay within a five minute time period for presentation.

Appendix G
Parent Permission

September 8, 1997

Dear Parent,

Thank you for returning the parent survey. Your responses are very helpful to our research. The focus of our work is to improve leisure time reading and promote awareness of literature for our students.

In order to find out your child's interest in leisure time reading, we will be giving a Reading Attitudes Survey in the classroom. This survey will not be graded, will not influence class participation, and is anonymous. All results will be strictly confidential.

We are attaching a sample of the questions for your review. Your signature will be required for your child to participate in the survey. Please return the form below indicating whether your child will be participating. If you would like to see the complete survey instrument, a copy is available in the school office for your perusal. Thank you for your cooperation.

Mrs. C. Smith Douglas Elementary School
Mrs. E. Tracy Washington Middle School
Mrs. L. Weber Jefferson Elementary School

Child_____

Yes, my child may participate in the Reading Attitudes Survey.

_____

Parent Signature

No, I don't care for my child to participate.

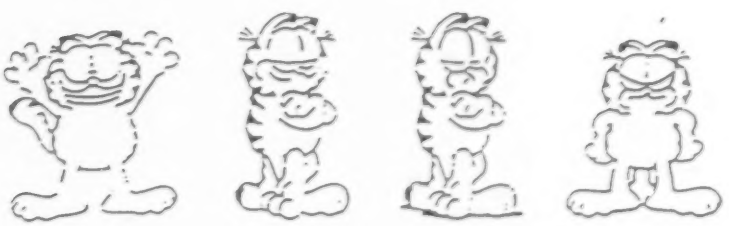
_____

Parent Signature

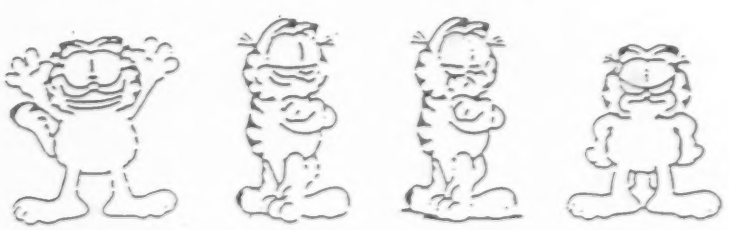
Appendix G (Continued)

In addition to the parent survey I will be surveying your child in order to find out your child's interest in leisure time reading. The survey is called the Reading Attitudes Survey and a sample of the test is shown below. A copy of the entire survey is available in the office if she should want to see it. The survey will be administered to your student on Tuesday, September 16 unless you have some objection. The survey will be used again around January to see if improvement has been gained in reading interest. Please contact me if you have any questions (875-1440 Home, 875-6424 School).

How do you feel about reading for fun at home?



How do you feel about getting a book for a present?



Appendix H
Parent Letter

September 11, 1997

Dear Parent,

We are currently enrolled in a graduate program at St. Xavier University. The focus of our work is to improve leisure time reading and promote awareness of literature for our students. We believe that there may be no higher educational goal than developing a lifelong reading habit.

In order to find out about your child's interest in leisure time reading, we are asking you to complete the attached survey. Please return the completed anonymous survey in the self-addressed stamped envelope, which is provided by September 15, or as soon as possible.

Feel free to contact us if you have any questions, concerns, or input. Your responses are very important to our study. Thank you for your cooperation.

Mrs. C. Smith Douglas Elementary School
Mrs. E. Tracy Washington Middle School
Mrs. Lynne Weber Jefferson Elementary School

Appendix I
Post Intervention Parent Letter

January 29, 1998

Dear Parent,

This letter is to update you on the progress of my St. Xavier graduate school research project that I informed you about in September that involves my teaching method with your child in my reading classes. As you probably remember, at that time I asked you to complete a parent survey to measure reading levels at the beginning of the intervention. Now I am again requesting you to respond to the same questions with the addition of one new question which you will find at the end of the form. This final survey will allow me to measure differences in interest, attitude, etc. between September and now.

Please return the completed anonymous survey in the self-addressed stamped envelope by February 6. Even if you never returned the first survey in September, I would still appreciate your returning this one. Even if you forget to send it back by the February 6 date, please send it even if it is late.

I am especially enjoying seeing some of the creative book responses that are being done. Thank you for your support and cooperation.

Appendix J
Parent Survey

1. On an average, how many minutes daily does your child observe adults engaged in leisure time reading?

0-10 min._____ 15-30 min._____ over 30 min._____

2. On an average. how many minutes daily does your child choose to engage in leisure time reading?

none_____ 5-10_____ 15-30_____

30-60_____ over 60_____

3. Check which types of reading materials you have available in your home?

magazines_____ children´s magazines_____

newspapers_____ encyclopedia_____

books_____ children´s books_____

electronic media (ex: internet) _____

4. On average how many minutes does someone read to you child daily? (ex: parent, babysitter, older sibling)

0-10 min. _____ 15-30 min. _____ over 30 min._____

5. What types of reading material does your child enjoy? (Check all that apply)

mystery_____ animal stories_____
fantasy_____ biographies_____

humorous_____ poetry_____

science_____ chapter books_____

science fiction_____ magazines_____

easy reader/picture books_____ sports_____

encyclopedias_____ historical fiction_____

electronic media_____ other_____

Appendix J (Continued)

6. Does your household have a library card?_____

   If yes, how often do you frequent the library?_____

7. What types of obligations prevent you from engaging in leisure time reading? (Check all that apply)

   job_____

   child care_____

   continuing education_____

   home chores_____

   community involvement_____

   other_____

8. What types of activities does your child participate in?

   sports_____

   television_____

   dance, gymnastics, music_____

   video/computer games_____

   play (free time)_____

9. How much time does your child spend watching television/video games daily?

   0-30 min._____ 30-60 min._____

   1 hour-2 hours_____ more than 2 hours_____

10. Have you noticed a change in your child's reading interest? Explain please.

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

Appendix K

Post Survey Parent Narrative Responses: Second Grade

Have you noticed any changes in your child's reading habits? Please explain.

He reads a lot better since getting into 2nd grade. He now likes to read himself instead of always being read to. He sounds out a lot of the words.

Have you noticed any changes in your child's reading habits? Please explain.

Yes, an interest in reading books with more complicated story lines. More interest in non-fiction.

Have you noticed any changes in your child's reading habits? Please explain.

Compared to the beginning of the school year, he chooses to read less and less and it's quiet the struggle anymore for him to read at all.

Appendix K (Continued)

Have you noticed any changes in your child's reading habits? Please explain.

Enjoys reading more than ever. Want to be the one doing the reading; doesn't want to be read to.

Have you noticed any changes in your child's reading habits? Please explain.

My child enjoys reading more now that he is a better reader.

Have you noticed any changes in your child's reading habits? Please explain.

Our reading time is before bed. They don't necessarily want to start reading, but once they do, they don't want to stop. (twins)

Have you noticed any changes in your child's reading habits? Please explain.

Do like to read different forms of material now, not just books. They'll look at the newspaper comics or read the menu at restaurants, or mail for them, like magazines.

Appendix L

Post Survey Parent Narrative Responses: Third Grade

What changes have you noticed in your child's reading habits? Please explain.

Our son is spending more time reading a variety of reading material. Currently the "Kids Discover Magazine" is one of his favorites. When he finds a topic that interests him I have helped him find related information in newspapers and the World Book Encyclopedia. He is becoming more confident using different resource material.

When reading a book she is very interested in the will now finish it in one day leaving hardly anytime for play, etc. Reads every night in bed for 15 minutes even if she has read in the afternoon

The types of books Chosen.
Spends more time reading.
Shares what's read with family members.
Suggests book titles to others.

My Child is picking up more books & more advanced books. He has more of a thirst for knowledge

Appendix L (Continued)

Sometimes she gets bored with Visdo tapes, or play activities & I'll find her on her room reading, or sitting quietly somewhere in the house reading. It's awful that she has to feel bored - but that has to do with wanting to do it which I think is wonderful

More patient and taking his time so he understands what he's reading.

The older he gets - the less he likes to read.

There is less time that reading is done at home

I am still having a hard time interesting him in reading. He always says "I don't like reading."

X = decided to change book

✓ = finished book

Appendix M

Sample: Second Grade Quiet Time Reading Log

Date Fri. Dec. 12

Completed your hand

1. If You're not Here Please Raise ☐
2. I Wonder Why ☐
3. Big Cats ☐
4. I Wonder Why ☐
5. Falling Up ☐
6. X ☐
7. Abe Lincoln ☐
8. The New Kid on the Block ☒
9. The Heartland ✓
10. I Wonder Why ☐
11. Big Big World + Helen Keller ☐
12. (absent) ☐
13. (absent) ☐
14. I Wonder Why ☐
15. Science land ☐
16. One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue ✓
17. Helen Keller ☐
18. X ☐
19. I Wonder Why ☐
20. Where the Sidewalk Ends ☒
21. X ☐
22. Animals Animals ☐
23. A Giraffe And a Half ☐